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THE

# SATURDAY REVIEW

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## Notes of the Week

We learn on the highest authority that civilisation is in danger of destruction if Great Britain does not pay the U.S. £20,000,000 on

**Mere Bore-**  
**ah** December 15, this being the instalment then due of our debt to America, representing money bor-

rowed during the war (the greater part being in payment for shells and other military stores manufactured in America). It is idle for intelligent Americans to repeat to us as many have done that Senator Borah is a numskull, a backwoods jackanapes to whom no one in his own country pays the slightest attention: the fact remains that he is chairman of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the Senate.

He will not be so for much longer, but he still is. And his deliberate opinion is that failing payment of this "small sum"—to use Senator Borah's own words—"civilisation may be destroyed."

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It is indeed sad that one of America's ninety kings should have his equanimity so disturbed, and a revelation to us that "God's Pay or Buy own country," to which the war brought virtually nothing but profit, should be in so parlous a state as that indicated by Mr. Borah. His conclusion would appear to be "Scrap the Treaty of

Versailles." Might he not perhaps rather reason, were he capable of so old-world an operation, that the simpler way to restore economic equilibrium would be to cancel out the hideous rows of figures standing to the debit of all countries to which the U.S. is so desperately anxious to sell its overflowing goods? Force to pay, or enable to purchase?

Saner American intelligence, we are glad to note, is swinging over to a serious appreciation of the point of view expressed in the British government's statesmanlike note to Washington. This country does not refuse to pay its debts incurred as above. But it does ask for time and for readjustment in view of changed circumstances. Should these not be granted, the creditor may find that he has forced his debtor into a position where he cannot pay at all.

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Mr. Cosgrave's slashing attack on de Valera and his dishonest follies has been followed by de Valera's insistence that the God Save Ireland Irish farmer must go on paying the land annuities which are being stolen from this country. Perhaps the two, taken together, may force the pace of a discontent which alone can save Ireland from the completion of its self-decreed ruin. And we must admire, if we had been led to expect, the courage which truly animates Cosgrave. But it

would be hypocrisy to pretend that any probable course of events in Ireland can be comforting or tolerable. The forces of order and disorder are too obviously gathering for a tragic clash and Mr. Cosgrave's blunt speech in the Dail may well mean that he is satisfied with the efficiency of the forces of order. If so, that is a point for hopefulness. But only in the long run, since the spirits of disorder which de Valera has summoned from the vasty deep of gunland and terrorism will not melt away at the waving of a wand. And when or if it is all over who, regarding past history, dare imagine that Southern Ireland could ever encompass or enjoy any sort of peace with honour?

\* \*

It is not good to hear of two escapes from Dartmoor, however soon recapture may put an end to the adventure. It is, after all,

**Not  
Good  
Enough**

only ten months—not a long sentence to serve—since the mutiny, the panic, and the pother. That is too short a period of fairly efficient discipline under a new sort of regime, especially when we discover that one of the present adventurers had already escaped only a month after the mutiny. Mr. Galsworthy has made a romantic business of escape from Dartmoor and there must always be some hint of sympathy with men who make a bid for freedom. But on the Moor itself this sympathy wears thin and, at its best, it is part of a sloppy sentimentalism which puts the affairs of life in a wrong perspective. It is the business of a penal system to remove hardened criminals from a society which they endanger and of a prison to keep them in confinement. Sympathy is muddle-headed. Irritation at the failure of the system is the beginning of wisdom.

\* \*

It is beyond hope that Lord Salisbury's plan for a reconstituted House of Lords will be taken more seriously than its predecessors.

**The House  
on the  
Marsh**

But that is not because, as is said, it has all the demerits of previous plans with very few of their advantages, but because no party in the State has the least inclination to reform the House of Lords. Only one party could do it—the Conservative party, and that party has every possible incentive to make a sane, strong Second Chamber. But when has the Conservative Party and its leaders shown high courage in politics? Not since the days of Lord Salisbury and Joseph Chamberlain. A weak House of Lords is an encumbrance to Government and a peril to stability. But because the subject is marked "inflammable" and because the least desirable part of the hereditary principle has social influence and cantankerous adherents Conservatism shrugs its cynical shoulders.

Yet here is perhaps the last opportunity for making safe, with a National Government in office.

**Lack  
of  
Courage**

And are we to be told seriously that the difficulties of reconstitution are insuperable? That would be utter nonsense. A special franchise and a qualification for election are surely essential to any firm Second Chamber based on some sort of democratic principle. The retention of the hereditary principle in legislation in diminished quantity and improved quality is obvious enough. The restoration of many of the powers wrested from an enfeebled House of Lords is a necessity. And if the wits of statesmanship are unequal to filling in the gaps and presenting to the Commons and the nation a measure that would win the approval of intelligent persons, then statesmanship has no wits at all. As for the existing House of Lords, it would still be working well in practice, however anachronistic in theory, if a fatal poltroonery had not given an undeserved victory to Mr. Lloyd George and his preposterous threat to swamp the land with *ad hoc* peerages. But poltroonery crept in and the hereditary principle, as such and by itself, became in that moment indefensible.

\* \*

A pretty little quarrel based on ancient lights of journalistic ethics has broken out between Mr.

Crum, President of the O.U.B.C.,

and our contemporary the "Isis."

**Putney  
to  
Mortlake**

His feelings inevitably ruffled by

inevitable criticism Mr. Crum has

protested to the editor and asked him to "refrain from publishing articles which give the general public the wrong impression of Oxford rowing." Greater than Mr. Crum—Foreign Offices, Governments, and Big Business—have often tried thus to intimidate or muzzle a Press greater than the Isis. Like Mr. Crum they have generally received exactly what they asked for—a buffet on the other cheek. And properly so, for a pliable Press is not much use to itself or anyone else. As to Oxford rowing and its critics, Heaven defend us from being mixed up in their quarrels. But may we suggest that the only impression of Oxford rowing given to the general public which matters at all has been and will be given by the eight Oxford men who race from Putney to Mortlake?

\* \*

Disarmament continues to provide the farce or, if anyone prefers, the tragedy on the stage of the

Théâtre des Nations, Genève.

**Once more  
into  
the Breach**

While the City of Peace is in a state of siege and the Swiss army has been alternately crackling machine gun bullets through the guts of Socialists or Fascist fellow-Swiss (to think that the hotel-keeper should allow it!), one after another more grandiose plan is published by print or speech to

make shooting all over the world illegal, impossible and as out of date as the ichthyosaurus.

Can war between nations be abolished? Very likely fifty, or a hundred years hence. National war will cease to exist when it becomes unprofitable or impracticable. Just so did war between the barons cease to exist towards the end of the Middle Ages when the power of the Crown imposed internal peace upon them. But such a cause was impossible to foresee then, and the cause of the future abolition of war is impossible to foresee now—even if it should be almost within sight.

Can war be abolished now, or by human artifice? Of course it cannot. Anyone who maintains that it can is either an incurable optimist or else an insincere schemer. And, of all kinds of artifice, plans for general disarmament are among the least practical. Can anyone with his eyes open suppose that America and Japan are going to disarm while the question of control of the Pacific is open between them; that Soviet Russia will disarm so long as a chance is left to provoke world revolution; that Hungary will disarm with the Treaty of Trianon still valid; Germany while the Corridor and Upper Silesia remain Polish; Italy if she can still cherish a hope of expansion in Tunisia; France while Germany has a concealed army a million strong? Such suppositions are utterly vain and, if they had not been vain already, would be made so by the action of Germany which, in the pithy words of this month's *National Review*, "has withdrawn from Geneva until she is allowed to put her foot through the disarmament clauses of the Treaty of Versailles."

\*\*

We have much to admire in the Germans and much to thank them for. And for nothing do we owe them more gratitude than their outspoken frankness.

**Gifts  
from the  
Greeks**

By the mouth of their authorised statesmen they say: "We will never rest till our Eastern frontiers are rectified, and we will never rest until our former colonies are returned to us, and we will not accept any international control over our military establishment." As for their less official, but equally representative spokesmen, they have not ceased for years from saying, in slightly softened phraseology, that the German nation is bent on reversing the results of 1918. He who doubts what such a reversal would mean need only refer to the terms imposed by treaty on the two nations forced to make peace with Germany before the latter's defeat, namely, Russia and Roumania. If we should be simple enough, or weak enough, the same fate awaits ourselves.

For the hundredth time have the Germans proved their frankness by flatly rejecting M. Herriot's scheme for disarmament, officially termed "plan for the organisation of peace." This plan,

at last published in full, has all the virtues—except that of being adapted to the facts of the world we live in. The obligations it seeks to impose on Germany, though much less than those at present theoretically in force, the obligations sought to be imposed on Great Britain, though not much more than we might willingly undertake, the obligations suggested for the U.S.A., which will not have any at all, form a wind that blows M. Herriot's document straight to the limbo for stillborn constitutions.

\*\*

In these circumstances it is hard to have patience with Sir John Simon's puerile proposal—that Simple Simon Germany, together with the other European States, should join in a solemn promise never again to have recourse to force of arms for the settlement of differences.

Was ever a more solemn promise given than in the guarantee of Belgian neutrality? Was ever promise so lightly repudiated? Well might Sir Austen Chamberlain say in the House of Commons that "he and others who were friends of Germany had been disturbed and surprised and rendered anxious by utterances and actions of people whose position in Germany made it impossible to ignore them. What we want to see in their speeches and their policy is loyal acceptance of their treaty obligation. What we do ask of them is that they should recognise that the law of Europe must be based on treaties and that treaties must or can only be changed by treaties." Sir Austen Chamberlain will have to wait long before he obtains such a recognition, unless modified by the tacit condition that the last named treaties may be preceded by a different style of intervention.

\*\*

It must again be insisted that the choice between immediate reduction of defence forces on a large scale and a catastrophic war in the near future is a fallacy supported, if not promoted, by persons who thought to get personal or party kudos out of the Disarmament Conference at Geneva.

The Only Danger

So long as the strength of Great Britain and France is not brought down too low, and so long as pro-German intrigues in this country can be prevented from driving an effective wedge between the policies of the two countries, there is no really serious danger of war in Europe except and perhaps even including a gambler's last throw by the Soviets. The only danger to peace that can definitely be estimated would arise from the encouragement of concealed ambitions as the result of weakness on the part of those who have nothing to conceal. All Englishmen have to do is to "mind our step."

It would of course be very nice for peace loving nations like ourselves and France to cease from spending millions on defence against hypothetical attack. All that can be said is, in the words of a famous retort on the question of capital punishment, "que Messieurs les assassins commencent." France has put off laying down her battle cruiser the Dunkerque as long as she dared. She would have preferred to put it off altogether. But when others commence . . .

\* \*

If it be true, and it would seem to be, that mistletoe for Christmas has no longer any particular hold on public affection, is

**Mistletoe  
and  
Modesty**

that surprising? Whatever may be the moral code or the social customs of insurgent youth, neither boys nor girls nor men nor women are likely to go hunting about for mistletoe as an excuse for kisses. We may surely thank our stars that under them that silly sort of sham has disappeared. Kissing as a signal of admiration or a symptom of love may be good, bad, silly, wise, important, trivial, glorious or idiotic. That is as the individual finds it. But kisses of any sort or kind that must be excused by mistletoe and modesty are obviously not worth the cost of the mistletoe. And, like Valentines, mistletoe may have had its day.

\* \*

The *Post Magazine and Insurance Monitor*, a publication well-known in the insurance world,

**"Damages"  
Touts**

seems to us to be rendering a public service by its exposure of the methods of some of the organisations known as "Legal Aid Societies." It seems to be the practice of these bodies to tout for clients principally among persons who have been injured in street accidents, and one case, quoted by a well-known assessor, is as follows :

"A man has just called to see me for my opinion. His son was knocked down in the street five days ago, and I should say that £10 is the extent of any claim that could be made. By the same post he received seven offers to take up the case. The Legal Aid Societies concerned are located in London, Birmingham, North Wales, Manchester and Bristol, and they all enclosed stamped addressed envelopes. This is a record; while I know of five offers in one instance, four is quite common."

The general practice seems to be to charge two shillings in the pound on whatever damages are obtained, and one instance is given of a Legal Aid Society writing no fewer than fourteen letters in connection with a case that was settled, independently of the Society, on a perfectly friendly basis for £1. It seems to us that here is a situation which might advantageously be dealt with by the insurance companies and the Law Society working in co-operation.

Of course the Means Test Bill excites all sorts of antagonisms, of which opposition by local authorities who feel their powers and responsibilities in jeopardy may not be the most significant.

**The  
Other Means  
Test**

But after all the fuss and rumpus about the actual Means Test, all this is comparatively unexciting. Meanwhile the Amalgamated Society of Income Tax Payers has not formulated its policy, given tongue to its grievance, or even begun its platform and parliamentary agitation. It is a little difficult to understand why the Grand Grievance should thus hang fire. For why should millions of citizens submit tamely to a means test more inquisitive, harsh and searching than can be imagined by those who do not fill up returns of income? Strangely enough these supine millions have been submitting to this Means Test for years and years and are still submitting because the State must live and the taxed must pay to keep it alive.

\* \*

The Burmese General Election has on the face of it decided that Burma shall not be separated from India, since 39 Anti-Separationists

**On the Road  
to  
Mandalay**

have been returned against 29 Separationists and 9 Neutrals. However things are seldom what they seem and the decision which would strike at the root of Indian policy must not be taken too seriously. The Indian Nationalists have been hard at work and absurd stories spread broadcast to frighten the ignorant voter. The Anti-Separationists, however, admit that union with India is not their real object. They justify themselves on the score of trying to squeeze a better Constitution out of Great Britain. In well-informed circles here it is believed that when the Legislative Council meets, the Separation party will find a majority; for all Burmese parties realise that Burma has nothing to gain but national disappearance by absorption in India.

\* \*

To those of us who long ago took our public school exams, passed out and went on to the University, the importance attached to a school certificate and

**The  
Mandarin's  
Button**

the centralisation of all examinations seems doubtful, not to say perilous, progress. The lust for marks used to be a serious drawback to the pursuit of letters and learning, but at least cramming was rare and there was some hope of a boy's natural gifts receiving attention. As it is, despite a multitude of subjects, youth is faced with a Procrustean bed, into which he must fit. There is no hope for him, for instance, unless he can struggle through elementary mathematics. Yet there are men of letters of high renown, scholars and remarkable linguists, who have never succeeded in understanding the simplest arithmetic. Now they would be barred from the Mandarin's button of the school certificate.

**OLD AGE**

When travelling is over let me rest,  
In the smiling, wrinkled countryside;  
Near the graves and lives that I love best,  
Let me rest.

When singing is over let me hear  
The throb of a new Youth's urgency,  
Those melodies that Youth holds dear;  
Let me hear.

When writing is over let me read,  
Draw me a chair to a friendly hearth,  
Find me my pipe—they are all I'll need;  
Let me read.

When loving is over let me guard  
Memories of what has been;  
O! keep my mind from growing hard,  
Keep guard.

When living is over let me die,  
Die with a faith in the fitness of time;  
Then, of your charity, let me lie,  
Nearby.

Peter Winckworth.

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\*

A committee lately appointed to enquire into the public education of the boys and girls of Hornsey has decided that the modern **Hornsey and Handwriting** youngsters, though they have good academic qualifications, are quite unable to pass simple tests in arithmetic, English and handwriting.

The committee has many ideas about why this sad state of affairs has come to pass—one of them being that the use of typewriters in modern business has, by some strange chance, affected the handwriting of the boys and girls in Hornsey. The committee with the usual sagacity of committees appointed "to look into things" then go on to say that distinction in Imperial and local government and the rights and duties of citizens should have a permanent place in the school curriculum.

But the committee is strangely obtuse if it does not realise that is because so much has been added to the school curriculum that the modern child has no chance of cramming it all into its small head. We are wholly in favour of children being educated in Imperial and local government matters. Where we disagree with the Hornsey Committee is here: we would much prefer young Hornseyites to be intelligent Imperialists than to be able to write a perfectly good hand. If you can get it both ways, well and good. But you can't.

\*\*

On how many church doors in country parishes throughout England are found notices which dis-

figure the door and waste the cost of paper, ink, and printing? It may be true that the archaic law requires warning to be given to the parish—warning about income-tax and assessments and swine fever and bye-laws and regulations and

what not and which not and why not. It may be that unfortunate Churchwardens, a comic and yet pathetic race of men, are properly required by an Urban or Rural Clerk to the Council to see that these notices are affixed to the Church door.

But what earthly good is served by all this? How, in the name of glory, is the conduct of local or national affairs bettered or helped? No one ever looks at a single one of the notices. They are pasted and put up one on top of the other, a palimpsest that stretches back for years and means nothing in the world to any one at all. And if they are no earthly good, they have certainly no heavenly merit or inspiration. So here we are, in one small instance, wasting effort, money, and worry in a way ridiculous and stupid. And in how many other ways?

\*\*

**MY MASTERPIECE**

(With apologies to last week's crop.)

If ever I have the courage to write a book,  
I shall certainly look  
With confidence at the pages of *The Sunday Times* and *Observer*

Where the week's masterpieces are announced with such fervour,  
For I feel sure it will only be a question  
Of whether my book is "a miracle of significant suggestion,"  
Or "abounding with dramatic feeling,"  
Or "exquisitely revealing."  
I have too a sort of notion  
That someone will say it is "vibrant with real emotion,"

While another will no doubt find my writing  
"Entertainingly exciting."  
My book will, of course (as so often in the past),  
Be "a book that will last,"

And it will be freely hinted  
That it is "one of the most audacious novels ever printed,"  
It will be rather jolly to read under my name  
"This book is assured of fame,"  
Or to see something like this—  
"A book no one can afford to miss."

My book with its "lucid, radiant pages"  
Is sure to be "the best novel that has appeared for ages."

It will be described as "daring, dynamic, delicious;"  
"Suggestive but never vicious;"  
"A book of extraordinarily high level;"  
"A novel in which to revel."

My book, in fact, from what the advertisements state,  
Will make Scott, Dickens and Thackeray look second-rate.  
However, if I ever do write a book, if I were you  
I should see first what they have to say about it in the *Saturday Review*!

W. HODGSON BURNET

**Doorkeepers in the House of the Lord**

# A Subject to be Avoided ?

By Sir John Sykes, K.C.B.

**T**HE new Home Secretary has recently had his attention called, by questions in the House of Commons, to the Report of the Royal Commission on Licensing, which his predecessor, Sir Herbert Samuel, had been "considering" for the last nine months before his resignation. Sir John Gilmour was asked whether he could say what the Government were going to do about this Report, and he replied that he saw "no prospect of legislation in the near future."

Now, since 1921 (when an avowedly temporary Act was passed) Government after Government have taken the perfectly reasonable line that this subject is one which must be treated as a whole. The present Government stated that this was their own view in March last, and the Home Secretary's new statement therefore postpones to the Greek Kalends not only any chance of a Government Bill dealing with the subject comprehensively, but also any chance of a private member's Bill dealing with any aspect of it.

The Report of the Royal Commission—whatever else may be said about it—shows conclusively that the present Licensing Law bristles with imperfections of almost every kind—anomalies, out-of-datenesses, unfairnesses, and absurdities. These defects not only are a fruitful source of inconvenience and irritation to those whose business it is to administer the law relating to hotels, restaurants and public houses, to the trade which provides and conducts them, and to the mass of the population which uses them or would like to use them, but they also make the actual work of public-house improvement a more quarrelsome and dilatory matter than it ought to be.

It is practical matters like this, and not controversies over the antiquated shibboleths of national drunkenness, prohibition, local option and the like, which constitute the "Drink Question" of to-day.

In the last 10 or 15 years there has become evident not only a change in the facts of the case, but also a change, amounting almost to a revolution, in public opinion. The main cause of the contentiousness which has for so long surrounded and stale-mated licensing legislation was the knowledge that there was a genuine cleavage of opinion upon the question which is fundamental to the whole subject, the question, namely, whether those who wish to drink "intoxicating liquor" (the very term is an archaism) as a civilised part of their civilised life in a civilised community should be made free to do so in civilised conditions, or whether, on the other hand, legislation should proceed on the assumption that there is something unnecessary, or even uncivilised, about beer, wine and spirits, and that we may look forward to a day when the taste for them will have been preached, if not legislated, out of existence.

The belief that one or other of these widely differing views was held by large numbers of deter-

mined voters naturally made politicians with precarious majorities shy of burning their fingers. It is now plain that it need do so no longer.

The wide-spread adoption of the policy of improvement in the public house is the sign, the outcome and the keynote of this new world.

The public houses of this country belong, speaking broadly, to the brewers of the country; consequently, unless the State is prepared to expropriate the brewers and to do the job itself (which is, let us say, unlikely), the State must call in aid the resources and the good will of the brewers. It is true that, at the moment, the resources and the good will of the brewers are temporarily obscured, and they are protesting with some bitterness that the increased beer tax is eating such a large hole in their profits that public house improvement must wait. But the chairmen of brewery companies who have been loudest in these protestations at their annual meetings have generally spoken of public house improvement as if it were now the declared policy of the Trade, and we can therefore console ourselves with the suggested implication that they would be ready to go full-steam ahead if only the increase in the beer tax could be removed.

Unfortunately, however, as the Royal Commission explain in their Report, there can be no possibility of going full-steam ahead through the mists and mazes of the existing law. Sir John Gilmour's recent declaration, therefore, will not only disappoint all who, whether as traders or as administrators, have been hoping for many long-overdue amendments of the law; it will also disappoint the social reformers and with them the public generally, who have come to see in this policy a prospect of a much-needed change for the better in the conditions under which the nation as a whole can enjoy their refreshments, their leisure, and their recreations.

And it is not only the changes—the changes in the facts of the case and in public opinion—which have taken place in the last 10 or 15 years which combine to make the present time, or, at least, the "near future," opportune for a fresh handling of this subject by Parliament upon modern lines. Most of the members of the Government, and nearly all their supporters in the House of Commons, to whichever of the pre-crisis parties they belong, owe the triumphant majorities by which their position has been assured to the votes of thousands of electors who in ordinary times would have voted against them.

Each and all of them, in this Parliament, are trustees for these electors as well as for their own normal supporters. Consequently, they not only should, but can, combine to look at a question like this in a genuinely national spirit. It would, no doubt, be over-sanguine, to suggest that licensing legislation could be undertaken without fear of controversy on minor points. But the way is clearer for an advance, and the composition of the

Government and the composition of Parliament are both better adapted for the making of an advance than has been the case for a generation. Some side-wind, some glaring abuse, some accident, may at any time force some aspect of the question upon Parliament, and the Government

may be tempted or compelled to deal with it in a scrappy and hand-to-mouth fashion.

Surely all well-wishers of the Government must hope that they will not lay themselves open to the reproach that in this matter they have shirked their responsibilities and missed their opportunity.

## Red Letter Days

### Confound the Dogs. By Guy C. Pollock

**C**ONFOUND the dogs; they really do interfere a good deal with the humdrum current of one's concerns. I should, for instance, find it easier to write the number of words calculated nicely to fill two columns if Judy were not sitting in an armchair by my side on Sunday evening. It is, I agree, ridiculous that Judy, a spaniel in training to be a competent gun-dog, should be sitting in an armchair. But it is less ridiculous than her sitting on my knees, on to which she clambered laboriously ten minutes ago after tea. So I put her down and got up and came into this room to write, shutting her in with Winkle and the others. Less than five minutes later she was brought to me because they were tired of her whining and sniffing at the door.

#### The Homing Instinct

She ought not to be here at all. She ought to be in her kennel, which is in a field and the field is half a mile away (up the main road, turn to the right, under the railway arch and then on your left—about two blocks, as an American might say). But this obstinate and rather disquieting game which she is playing with us began on Friday. On that day I found Judy, as usual, down at the house and in the afternoon I went, with Judy, to a root field on the boundary to try and get one or two of the cocks which always go over the railway line to no man's land. I got two of them and Judy, without the exciting influence of a lot of men and dogs, did nothing wrong.

So I made much of her (but not more much than usual) and left her, tucked up with, so to speak, a hot-water bottle, a cup of tea, and a novel, and drove the half mile home. I had put the car away and taken the pheasants down to the cellar and changed my stockings and begun to clamour for a cup of tea when One, looking out to the lawn, said "Here's Judy!" And it was so. It was late then, and there were important things to do in the little town, so she had her way and slept that night in a basket in my dressing room.

When Saturday—a little day shot over an impenetrable jungle of undergrowth with a lot of leaves still on the trees and a couple of quite good stands despite of all, and Heaven send us a few sharp frosts—when Saturday was ended I left Judy with her keeper, with orders that the hole which she had bitten on Friday in the wire of her run should be made good very stoutly, and that she should be shut in her kennel for the night. So that divine service on Sunday left my always

errant thoughts at least free of Judy, and my morbid imagination invulnerable to pictures of her peril along the quarter mile of high road.

I was, am, and will be a fool. When, after lunch, I began to wonder whether there was time to go up and discover whether any birds had been picked up, there was a new shout of "Judy" and there she was again outside the window.

So here she is in the armchair and, at the moment, snoring, with her eyes wide open. I was interrupted in writing for a colloquy with her keeper, who is perturbed as I am because she now howls and barks for most of the night. We have agreed on a match-boarded run and extra defences (more expense, Judy, and bother you) and a chain until the fortification of the Eastern frontier is, so to speak, complete. Meanwhile here she stays, all set for another night (the baggage and bless you, Judy) in my dressing-room. But when I start early to-morrow for a morning's shoot elsewhere on my way to London, she will be left in durance, and that is certainly that.

So confound the dogs. For there always remains when I am here, the job of taking Winkle out before we go to bed. And how many thousands up and down this dog-loving land know what that means? It means, with Winkle, so many variable things—usually a familiar route across the lawn to number one shrubbery, and then a pause for introspection and the careful investigation of the whole subject matter of non-existent fleas which create the illusion of their activity on the backs of very small dogs, followed by a more purposeful visit to number two shrubbery and a triumphant race for home.

But on Saturday we were not introspective and the importance of fleas was not apparent. No, we had other plans. So we ran quite fast (with the torch-light nearly left behind) from Judy's hangar to Winkle's cabbages. There we seemed for a moment to go to ground. But we were off again, the torch-light giving tongue, with a swing right-handed for Miss Wong's celebrated rhubarb plantations. The pace was a cracker and grief pretty general and the torch-light was scarcely up at the finish. Hounds and horses had certainly had enough and only Winkle was still breathing easily and full of running. And so home.

Where the dickens shall we go to-night? It is very cold so we shall probably potter distressfully up and down number one shrubbery.

Confound the dogs!

# A Great Viennese Collection

By Tancred Borenius

**T**HE private collections of Vienna have now for many generations added a feature of great charm and interest to the physiognomy of the incomparable *Kaiserstadt*, reflecting as they do the aesthetic outlook of a cultured leisurely society, without any violent *parti-pris*, but extending on the contrary a wide tolerance to the most varied expression of artistic endeavour. Most of the private collections of Vienna have, fortunately, so far successfully withstood the onslaughts which have followed in the wake of the political and economic convulsions of the times. The Liechtenstein collection survives practically unchanged in its glorious palace, with the large entrance hall on the first floor suggesting an ideal décor for the second act of the *Rosenkavalier*; in the narrow rooms and passages of the Czernin collection you are still led up to the most impressive Vermeer in the world by the grand old butler with his Francis Joseph profile.

One collection is gone—swept away in the crisis which overtook Vienna in that year of disaster 1931, the collection formed by Herr Stefan von Auspitz, the well-known Viennese banker, and a creation hence of our own times, though fully worthy of being mentioned in the same breath as the private galleries which have been famous in Vienna, and the world over, for generations. Through the enterprise of another Austrian, Herr Walter Bachstitz, a selection of the pictures in this great collection will now be on view for a few weeks at Messrs. Agnew's: and the chance which is here afforded is one which should on no account be missed by any art lover.

### The Viennese Outlook

I referred previously to the catholicity of outlook as a primary characteristic of the Viennese tradition of collecting. The von Auspitz collection showed this characteristic in a very marked degree, and even the relatively small selection from its contents, which is now on exhibition in London, brings examples showing a remarkably wide range of school and period. The Italian school predominates, no doubt, definitely: but what a variety there is in the aspect shown; how wide is the span of time covered—from the immediate vicinity of Giotto down to the sparkling eighteenth century visions of Tiepolo!

One of the earliest pictures in the collection is the delightful panel of *Two Angels Making Music*, by the Florentine artist of the early fifteenth century, known as the *Maestro del Bambino Vispo*. The master is a typical exponent of the tendencies of the late Gothic movement, as exemplified also by his teacher, Don Lorenzo Monaco, who brought to Florence from Sienna something of the melodious sense of line and decorative splendour of the school of his native city. This panel has memories of much interest to me personally (if such a digression may

here be permitted): for I well remember, now close upon twenty years ago, first coming across this painting hung high up above a door at Buckhurst in Sussex, then the country home of Mr. Robert Benson, whose fine collection I was at that time cataloguing for the owner—it has, alas! now been scattered to the four winds.

I spoke before of the width of range evidenced in Herr von Auspitz's taste: but this should perhaps be qualified by the remark, that there may be traced a bond of unity between most of his pictures, due to a sense of intimacy which is generally present in them. Indeed, we are here introduced to some painters in a mood which one by no means associates with them in the first instance. Tintoretto, for example—the name spells agitation, turbulence, flashiness, by preference to anything else—well, there is by him in the Auspitz collection a half length *Madonna* which has a quiet gentleness and restfulness, which are, for that master, absolutely exceptional. Not that the picture is not brilliantly painted: the swiftness of the brush work is a delight to the eye, and so is the extraordinary transparency of the shadows.

### An Exceptional Greco

Greco is, of course, in many ways, a Tintoretto gone neurotic: he, too, is seen in the Auspitz collection in a mood of singular calm and freedom from exaggeration. The case in point is offered by the magnificent portrait of a young ecclesiastic, thought to be possibly St. Aloysius Gonzaga, shown in an attitude which suggests he is making a vow. The expression of that face, with its large dark eyes so intensely fixed on the spectator, is one which, once experienced, will never leave your memory; and again, from the purely pictorial point of view, the picture, in its extraordinarily restricted scheme, must be accounted an absolute masterpiece.

It is late in the day to break a lance for Giambattista Tiepolo: but it is interesting to record that at a time when his fame was very far from what it is now, Tiepolo was highly thought of in Vienna. It is hence but right, that the von Auspitz collection should contain two very fine works by him—two classical subjects, with but few figures, which once formed part of the decoration of the Palazzo Barbaro in Venice, and there doubtless must have most admirably fulfilled their part in the general scheme.

I have left myself but little space to deal with the examples of the Netherlandish and German examples: but reference should on no account be omitted to the portrait of an old woman by Meinling, which in its very restricted compass is a work of truly overwhelming power; to the two fine paintings by Joos van Cleve, *Lucretia Stabbing Herself* and the *Madonna and Child*; and finally to the absolutely delightful portrait of a lady by Lucas Cranach, no less effective from the decorative point of view than subtle as an essay in interpretation.

# Music and Musicians

By Herbert Hughes

**A**T long last the operatic affairs of this country are approaching something like organisation. A few days ago it was officially announced that an agreement had been reached between the Covent Garden Opera Syndicate (1930) Ltd., the Imperial League of Opera, the Old Vic Theatre, the Sadler's Wells Theatre, and the B.B.C. as to a working policy. A National Opera Council is to be formed, this to function chiefly as "an instrument of patronage" (as it is discreetly called), concerning itself with advancing the interests of the various sporadic seasons of opera in London and the Provinces. The membership of this body will number about 250 and include "the most distinguished musical amateurs in every part of the country"—a thoroughly sound idea; for without patronage in the best, or worst, or any sense the arts simply do not flourish. Opera will succeed in this country only when the amateurs are roped in; first the so-called leaders of society, all a-flutter with their little sincerities and their little vanities, their refinements and their vulgarities; those who have climbed with those whose ancestors did the climbing; those—perhaps the most valuable of all, because the most energetic—those who are still climbing.

### The Magic of Fashion

Let music become the fashion and you will see strange results. To be seen at Salzburg becomes as important as it is to be seen at Ascot. One cannot afford to miss Munich or Bayreuth if one would be considered well-informed. The other day a conspicuous lady of my acquaintance who knows everybody (as the saying is) invited one of the most austere critics of contemporary literature to meet Mr. X, the idolised author of the most meretricious best-sellers. She was honestly piqued at the critic's excuse. Yet this dear lady goes everywhere (as the saying also is); a Covent Garden first night (or any other first night) would be desolate without her charming presence. Her considered opinion on any subject beyond what is *chic* may be worthless, but she pulls her weight in society and has no hesitation in telling the world what she is about. She surrounds herself with intelligent people—provided they, too, are conspicuous—or with people who are born conspicuous and damn the intelligence. People who can be brainless or banal in three languages are, after all, endurable if they support the right thing; they are an inevitable part of our social structure, useful if not always strictly ornamental. Personally, I prefer them to be brainless rather than misguided. When brainlessness goes with good manners and a sense of humour one can generally forgive the most execrable taste. Art, being the essentially aristocratic thing it is, is the acid test of the non-artist's intelligence. Nothing is easier than to divide, in one's own mind, those among one's acquaintances who are amateurs of music and those who are definitely not. Those who are definitely not are almost certainly amateurs

of something else: painting or polo, cocktails or politics, or what not. When the National Opera Council gets into its stride I sincerely hope that the amateurs will assemble in force, lunch tremendously together, put all their names in the paper, and give all the support he so truly deserves to Sir Thomas Beecham, the arch amateur of our time.

During the week there has been considerable music-making. On Sunday afternoon the London Philharmonic Orchestra played again under Beecham and gave us a vivid performance of Balakirew's "Tamara," which evoked memories of the Russian Ballet of that unforgettable season of 1913 when Karsavina was the superb but sinister heroine. The playing was not all perfection and one suspected that rehearsals were incomplete. Florence Easton was too heavily accompanied in her Mozart aria ("Come Scoglio" from "Così fan tutte") but was supremely herself in the "Pace, Pace, Mio Dio" from Verdi's "La Forza del Destino." Haydn's "Drum Roll" symphony was a joyful experience.

### The Old Vic

"Così fan tutte" has been added to the Old Vic repertory. Here is the best of reasons for regarding the Old Vic (with Sadler's Wells) as the most significant theatrical movement in the country—at any rate, in relation to musical culture. Clive Carey's production was neat, alert, economical, and although the performance I heard under Aylmer Buesst's baton had some ragged edges, it had qualities that raised it above much that may be seen or heard (especially heard) in subventioned theatres abroad. Joan Cross and Winifred Kennard had clearly studied the score to some purpose, for their singing was generally a delight. Each has conquered an old tendency to wobble. (Miss Cross, by the way, should not be too shy of make-up. On Saturday it was inadequate). Praise should also go to Nora Sabini for her singing and acting of Despina's part, and to Arnold Matters, the best of the men, as Don Alfonso. The latter sings uncommonly well and carries himself with all the ease of a Scotti.

I have left myself a few lines only to record the début, at the Courtauld-Sargent Concerts, of Milstein, the Russian fiddler. He played in two concertos—Tchaikovsky and Brahms. He has great mastery of technique and unusual power, a consummate sense of rhythm, and is not sentimental. Perhaps it was this last quality which made me admire his Tchaikovsky more than his Brahms.

Brahms was all scaffolding—the scaffolding Brahms had discussed with Joachim. The real event of that programme, however, was the performance of Sibelius's Sixth Symphony. This is music reduced to its quintessence, minus all camouflage and all gesture. Sibelius had kicked all the scaffolding away, so to speak, before he put pen to paper.

THIS WEEK'S ARGUMENT

## Should You Look before You Leap?

**YES, BY JANE ORCHARD**

**L**EAP and leap quickly" is pre-eminently the cry of Youth—of youth impatient to get on, eager for the future and what the future may hold in store; to leap and waste no time in looking lest having looked, you look again and never leap at all.

"Oh the wasted opportunities; the chances lost through this looking business," cries Youth—and said with Youth's triumphant faith and careless optimism (which is really another form of egoism) it sounds well. But—and believe me there is a but—there is something seriously wrong with youth's reasoning.

It is not the looking which ultimately affects the leaping, but the courage, or lack of it, that makes our decisions final.

Yes, you ardent leapers, leaping blindly in the dark, who is braver—he, who shutting his eyes trusts blindly in the Great God Chance, or he, who having looked the odds squarely in the face, is yet prepared to face them?

George is seven years old, quick on his feet and with a lion's heart. No bank or ditch or wall or bog will frighten him.

And Pat—Pat is fifteen and growing old, but see him prick one soft ear, look down with velvet eye, pick his take-off with dainty care, and having looked—jump.

George is brave and strong and young, but Pat is my horse for rough and tricky country this side of Cranmere Pool.

If we bring courage with us and look, and having looked well we leap and fail, that at least is a failure whose memory need not haunt us, for all men fail sometimes, and we shall hear no voice crying in our ears "If only we had looked." And in a world so full of "I's" and "Me's" as is ours to-day we would do well to pause over a thought that is not always palatable and very often so frightening that men and women shirk it.

We are not solitary stars, remote and fixed in an immovable and empty space. Like it or not, we are intimately bound up with our fellow men and every day, every hour, we are making decisions which of necessity affect those immediately around us and which like pebbles in a pond send out ever widening ripples—no less important because they are silent while we only heard the stone's splash. Each word, each act, may have far-reaching effects on thousands of human beings. How do we know where this insensate leap will take us? Into the next field and on top of the man who has been put down in the ditch we cannot see. Crash into the affairs of other people, whose concern with us had never been suspected.

And it might be well for us if we could say with honesty—"If I have failed it has been through no error of judgment, for I have not lacked the courage to see things as they are, nor have I tempted Providence with reckless blindness."

"And yet I jumped."

**NO, BY G. CAMERON**

**S**O, my poor old creature, you are to ride at your fence, in a natural perturbation because the fence looks ugly, and examine it in every particular before you to decide to jump it. You are to dismount, are you? And being careful not to let the reins be snatched from your grasp, you are either to choose the easiest spot you can find, mount again, take your horse back, drive him at it and collect him carefully for the take-off, or you are to mount again and find the gate which leads you safely from the field and away from the hunt in which you were taking part.

It is not, you will admit, a very exhilarating exhibition. If you like to say frankly "I am afraid" then you have my personal sympathy and my admiration of your moral courage. But if you want to argue on more general lines, your case is pretty feeble.

Life, the larger hunt, it stiff with fences, small or great, and it is a good plan not to cross them till you come to them. But a lot of them must be crossed somehow and the one vital gift is decision. Who ever set the Thames on fire by long calculations and plans for the storage of petrol and combustibles? Who ever wrested his ambition from a reluctant or antagonistic world by careful consideration of (a) which ambition he meant (b) whether it was a worthy ambition and (c) who and what might best further its achievement? Who ever won his way by wondering? Who has dreamed a dream and seen a vision and, going away to compute the interpretation of dreams and consider dispassionately the elusiveness and unreality of visions, suddenly found dream reality and vision fact? No one at all. Because the mind that can calculate combustibles and scrutinise ambitions is fit only for the pettiness of prudence.

Know what you want—your instinct tells you that. Then go for it with every nerve and fibre of your being. Chuck you heart over the fence first, quiver and thump as it may, and you are much more likely to follow it with an unharmed body than if you try to take it after an agonised contemplation. And take it you must in the end.

Be damned—if I may say as much and so bluntly—to all this looking. It gets us nowhere; it dissipates ardour in hesitation and drowns enthusiasm in the cold waters of delay. We go up and down, to and fro in argumentative impotency only to find that the fence is still there, while our nerves are frayed and our courage has grown cold. So we arrive at some lack-lustre end, muttering "prudence" like some incantation from a cauldron of half-boiled witches.

You and your prudence! Did prudence ever win battles or found Empires or sing great songs or write resounding words? Look, if you must, until your eyes are glazed with fear and your heart, which once was hammering, moans fretfully and inaudibly within you.

And we others, who have had the sense to leap, will try to break your fall upon the other side.

MEALS CHEAP AND OTHERWISE (5)

# Chez Marcel

By H. Warner Allen.

Illustrated by "Gaston"

THE other day I found Gaston radiant. He had bought a sweepstake ticket and dreamed that he had drawn the winner. So certain was he of his good luck that he invited me to lunch with him regardless of expenses as the first fruits of his anticipated winnings. I hadn't the heart to remind him that the chances of his being killed-uncomfortably by a motor car and drawing a winner were about even: besides, if I had, I should have lost my lunch.

"We will go," said Gaston, "to a French house where one has the respect of the kitchen and where one has the taste of the simple. Find me such a restaurant as Voisin's used to be, where plain roast chicken was a poem in itself."

"Good," I replied, "we shall go chez Marcel, but be careful that you commit no solecism.

most censorious critic could find no complaint with the cooking or the serving of any dish.

The laughing "sommelier" with a vine leaf and a bunch of grapes in his buttonhole delighted Gaston. He was a Tourangeau and the two had a wealth of anecdotes about the wines of Touraine and Anjou to exchange.

"Are we going to drink Vouvray?" I enquired rather impatiently.

"But no," said Gaston crossly, "not in your abominable climate. I told you that we would have Rhône wines, wines with the blazing Midi sun bottled up in them."

His first choice fell on a white Hermitage of 1926. That year is excellent for the white Burgundies and the Hermitage from its more Southern vineyard was rich in flavour and aroma. There was a hint of flowers and fruit in its bouquet and, if it erred at all, it was on the side of coarseness. After all, only a fool goes to the Rhône to look for delicacy.

There followed a Châteauneuf du Pape of 1915 which possessed a dignity that I had not anticipated. For these red Rhône wines have to be very old, before they attain that roundness and velvety attraction which the wine-lover expects. Moreover when they are old, they are very difficult to handle, for they throw a very heavy sediment and need most careful decanting. Seven different grapes go to the making of a Châteauneuf du Pape and their varying qualities must be perfectly blended if the wine is to be successful. I felt that I could quite honestly congratulate the "sommelier" on that particular wine, as its harmony, if a little assertive, was complete and satisfying.

It need not be said that the coffee was really good and Gaston ordered the "fine de la maison," an excellent Grande Champagne, which was absolutely suited to the ordinary taste. It had of course that touch of sugar which the modern brandy drinker demands, and Gaston had a whispered conversation with the "sommelier." That worthy disappeared and returned with another Cognac of unknown age and "provenance." It was certainly very old, with an ethereal nose and just that hint of the wood which I love. Here was no added sugar, nothing but good vintage Cognac stored for years in the cask that gave it taste and colour.

"Epatant, mon vieux," said Gaston smiling, as he put his last touches to the "sommelier's" portrait.



Marcel is an artist and very particular. He expects his customers to know the art of good living . . ."

"Je suis français," said Gaston superbly, as though that settled the question.

It so happened that Marcel was ill and Gaston could not express his opinion of the patron's taste in a sketch, but we commandeered a portrait that was hanging on the wall.

Gaston's menu was extremely simple: an omelette Marcel, Saucisse Portugaise with potatoes and some excellent Brie. Its simplicity was a real test of the cook's genius; for the omelette though a creation of the house never lost its character and the main dish was just sausages and mashed raised to a higher power.

The charm of the meal, which made it worth its price, was the excellence of everything. The butter and bread were perfect in their way. The



## THEATRE BY JOHN POLLOCK

*Westminster Theatre.* Follow Me. By Tyrone Guthrie.

WHETHER the Second Advent is a suitable theme for a play may be open to question. What is unquestionable is that Mr. Tyrone Guthrie, having chosen that theme, has, in some important respects, treated it as well as possible. This is not to say that his play is a great work or that its grasp is equal to the tremendous subject at which it reaches; but it is a claim that "Follow Me" fulfils the elementary postulate that must be made of any play dealing with the character and influence of Christ, namely, that it should have dignity, good taste, and sincerity.

It is perhaps easier to come at the essence of "Follow Me" by considering its faults than by describing its merits. Nor is this written in any carping spirit: it is indeed the merits of the play that are the more conspicuous. It is simple, moving, at times poignant, and for a few moments touches heights of remarkable beauty. Now it is obvious that in a dramatisation of the Gospel story one of two courses must be followed. Either the subject must be treated as a mystery, of which the Passion Play of Oberammergau affords the modern type, or else the figure of the Saviour, dominating the action of the play as a whole or in some critical point of it, must nevertheless not appear on the stage. The second method is that of Mr. Guthrie; and he uses it in a manner of real and admirable originality.

"Follow Me" is the story of a small middle-class Glasgow family, the family of Matthew Anderson, to whom Christ comes in the year 1932, just as he may have come to Matthew, author of the Gospel, at the beginning of the era that is therefore named Christian. Matthew is due to start with his wife, son and daughter, on a picnic to celebrate the girl's birthday when he comes home from his office to say that, instead, he must buy food and drink to feast in his house with a Man who has come to him and a number of fishermen from Callum in his train.

Mr. James Woodburn makes a powerful effect as one who has looked on the face of the Son of God and, to the stupor of his family, is transfigured by an inner light that he cannot explain or understand but is potent to change his life. We might be in Galilee: the circumstances are almost precisely similar. Almost, but not quite. It is impossible for the spectator to forget that Christianity has already come to the world, and that, should the Founder return, this must necessarily alter the whole course of His mission and its reception, no matter how hard and dull the hearts of men have become. Therefore, despite the perfectly natural portrayal of Matthew and of his family and friends, an atmosphere of unreality is created that does injury to Mr. Guthrie's idea, which is to repeat the Gospel story in a dress of to-day. His conception is on a higher level than any "If Christ came to Chicago," but its execution is necessarily narrowed and made small by this defect.

In the last act, which should, properly speaking, be the culmination of the play, the fruits of an error, perhaps difficult to avoid, are most plain. Its action takes place after the Resurrection and the Ascension; Matthew's unbelieving son and daughter quit Glasgow for Canada, there to escape from the notoriety that their father's conduct has brought on them; and he and his wife, hardly more of a believer herself, are left to dictate and to type-write the Book that shall tell the story to future ages. Here Mr. Guthrie is so cramped by having to follow his original that he can turn no way. All the modern circumstances are bound to be different, but he is not free to develop them; therefore his last act is empty.

Thus the first act begins on a note of unreality, the last ends without substance: then how comes it that the middle seems brushed by so sure a hand and that it affects the spectator to the depths of his being? Simply enough. Mr. Guthrie has put the scene into a bedroom at a small London hotel, where Matthew, rejoined in time of trouble by the wife he has left, and Andrew, wounded in a street scuffle, wait in company with one or two others for news of the verdict in the trial of their Master for High Treason. The amazing effect produced by this scene, that every lover of the stage should witness, is due to our realisation that everything might have passed just so. Only the accoutrements of life have changed—Madeleine has come in her car, Matthew telephones to Martha at her comfortable suburban home—but the essence remains the same. Once given as cause the trial of the Master for assaulting fixed customs and opinions, and the result must be the same: the anguish, the terror, the fidelity, the faith must be the same.

This is a wonderful piece of workmanship, and gives high hope of Mr. Guthrie's future.

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# The New Bridge Laws

By Goulash

**T**HE deliberations of the Portland Club, the Whist Club of New York and the Commission Française de Bridge have extended over a period of three years or more, and I do not wish to appear ungrateful to the diligence of those concerned nor unappreciative of the resultant code when I say that such labour seems to me to have been not worth while and, in certain directions, definitely annoying to most classes of players.

To the majority the game was sufficiently attractive without this effort to internationalise it and generally tighten it up. For instance, I think it is quite a rare thing to find more than one person out of ten who has anything but the most elementary knowledge of certain rules about unwitting infringements in the course of play. When such a thing has occurred, we have generally referred to "old Stick-in-the-Mud," who could probably solve the problem, and failing him we had to search through the "book" until we found the appropriate penalty. But I am doubtful if anyone would either have noticed or been annoyed at any slight difference there may have been in the law referring to such an infringement, if he had been playing in London, Paris, New York, Tokyo or Timbuctoo. In other words, where there have been certain laws which may have needed either loosening or the opposite, surely the local authority in the different countries might have quietly revised them without all this rather pompous world-wide bother.

### The Main Changes

As far as Contract is concerned there are three main headings under which we can classify the alterations.

- (1) The new scale of scoring, to which people will have to become accustomed by degrees.
- (2) The increased premium for making a declared Grand Slam, which I regard as unsound.
- (3) The alterations in penalties to be claimed for the various "slips" everyone is liable to make in the course of play.

I cannot believe that the slight change in the penalties for undertricks can be of any value. The old scale of scoring was simpler than the new one and although I suppose that the latter may be regarded as mathematically more correct, yet this insistence on accuracy will, I claim, be an unnecessary annoyance to many people who will find the extra calculations confusing, despite the bright little Memoria Technica ( $250 + 450 = 700$ ). We have had some years now of Contract and have got into our own methods of counting up. I prophesy that rubbers will be even longer than they are now, unless the slower-witted old men bring an adding machine or a secretary to the table.

As far as the new No Trump alternative 30 and

40 trick value is concerned it is puerile, the only justification being the elimination of the 'odd 5' at the end of the score. Surely that is not a very bright thought after three years' discussion!

One thing I do agree with is the elimination of the premium scored for making a doubled contract. That appears to me to be sensible, for there was the reverse of any encouragement under the old scoring to make a sound double unless you were likely to put the opposition down at least two.

I cannot see any sense in the premiums for undoubted overtricks being trick-value. An over-trick should certainly count the same in any suit, and there seems little sense in the change.

As to the increased premium for making a Grand Slam, I think this is unsound because it gives a direct encouragement to gambling apart from correct calling. The whole point of Contract Bridge as compared with Auction Bridge is to reward an accurate caller, and to penalise both the overcaller and the undercaller in different ways. I have always been in favour of the bold and clever player being rewarded handsomely for a Slam call, but I doubt if a call of Grand Slam is worth this increased value. A Slam, after all, can only be called by the clever inter-bidding of two high class players or by a bold player taking a chance or by the clear indications of a freak hand which absolutely demands such a bid even from a couple of "mugs."

### Too Severe

It seems to me that the extra bonus will hold very little attraction either for the accurate callers or the "mugs," though it may be of encouragement to the "chancy" bidder.

In any case, it is much too heavy a penalty for the opposition, who may well lose on one hand, through no fault of their own, sufficient points to make them satisfied if they can break even by winning two or three ordinary sized rubbers afterwards.

I think the penalty is too severe for weaker players or those "running out of luck." The old rewards were sufficiently large.

I whole-heartedly agree with the law concerning the Declarer making a lead from the wrong hand. The American penalty has been adopted, which allows either opponent to make him lead from the correct hand, in which case he must, if he can, lead a card of the same suit. This should adequately deal with a situation which has often given the offender indirect information and a most undeserved advantage.

As to the revoke laws, if I have understood them correctly, they are likely to give considerable scope to a quick calculator of a "sharp" nature. I know Bridge laws are framed only for the "honest," yet I feel that such an invitation to those who are not particular in extricating themselves from difficult positions may easily give rise to disagreeable incidents.

# The Way of Madness

By a Student of Life

**A** GENERATION ago, magic and nonsense were synonymous and there was an end of it. Scarcely a contemptuous smile was spared for the earnest wizard of the past, with his wand, robes and cabalistic signs, his conjurations and suffumigations and all the rest of it. There has been a change to-day in the normal attitude towards magic. On the one hand, the psychologist examines it with scientific attention, since it registers and has registered from time immemorial strange kinks and abnormalities in the darkest abysses of the primitive subconscious. On the other hand in the intellectual chaos that followed the war there has been a wild outbreak of superstitions, once safely buried by the rationalist or the priest. Fortune tellers reap a rich harvest from those who have lost the courage to face life as it comes. "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign."

So pathetically those who have lost their faith seek to regain it by communications with another world, because they cannot see the truth that is within. A few more daring spirits are looking for some short cut out of their difficulties by reviving the practice of magic, forgetting that a short cut in the spiritual life is the road of madness.

*Glendower*: I can call spirits from the vasty deep.

*Hotsprur*: Why, so can I, or so can any man; But will they come when you call for them?

The trouble is that they do come—to the magician at any rate. A certain course of life leads to a vision of pink elephants or multi-coloured rats. Another culminates in the spectacle of dog-headed demons or bird-headed Egyptian gods. The apparitions are called up from the same section of the self with equally disastrous results.

Fortunately the practice of Magic is less attractive and more onerous than the pursuit of *delirium tremens*. In the past its adepts concealed such meaning as they had under a thick veil of symbolism and gibberish. Mr. Israel Regardie appears to be almost a pioneer in producing under the title of "The Tree of Life" (Rider, 15s.) a practical handbook to magic.

We may pass over the opening chapters dealing with the Jewish Qabalah. If the reader likes that sort of thing, he will find a fuller discussion in another book by the same author. "A Garden of Pomegranates," (Rider, 7s. 6d.). "The Sephir haZohar" denominates the hexagram of Sephiros clustered about Tipharas as the Microprosopus." After that fine phrase, I read no further.

Leaving the Qabalah for greater magicians, we find a solemn series of recipes for conversation with our Holy Guardian Angels and with the Essences of the Gods. After training his imagination and his will, the Magician or Theurgist, as he prefers to be called, will find himself in the presence of weird Egyptian gods, bird-headed and otherwise, and be borne to ecstasies past human understanding.

The method for schooling the imagination might well make a psychologist's hair stand on end. Externalisation is the greatest enemy of sanity. The madman thrusts out from himself into the outer world the images and fantasies which are born within himself. Our Magician starts by forcing himself to imagine that an exact image of his own body is standing in front of him. He tries to transfer his own consciousness to this imaginary body of light, which then sets out on journeys in the Astral Plane. By degrees he will get into communication with such startling Gods as hawk-headed Horus or ibis-headed Thoth.

The layman will not be surprised that great will-power is needed for such achievements and the will is to be trained on an odd principle. The would-be magician swears that he will not perform some neutral act such as crossing his legs or using the first person singular and every time he breaks his oath, gashes himself across the forearm with a razor.

### The Power of Gibberish

It all seems very childish and silly, particularly when we discover that incomprehensible gibberish is of real value in exciting the magician to that wild ecstasy in which he communes with composite gods. Mr. Ludovici in a book reviewed last week declared that a sense of humour was a bar to advancement. At least self-ridicule might give a man pause before he donned a strange cap and odder robes and armed himself with a magic wand and indulged in conjurations that played with such awe-inspiring names as "Argogobrao" or "Assalonoi." The Theurgist will meditate on such words and find for them a significance. With "Assalonoi," he will think of the first letter as suggestive of Harpocrates, the Lord of Silence; the second letter will be referred to "that card of the Tarot depicting the Holy Guardian Angel" and so forth. Might one suggest that the magician might save his sanity if he would apply the first three letters Ass to himself.

It is easy to make fun of these solemn magicians. When our author embarks on an explanation of the Mass of the Holy Ghost, he loses himself for the first time since he dealt with the Qabalah in incomprehensible symbolism. The truth he tries to disguise is to all appearances a perverse obscenity, and that can never be a truth.

Yet such half-truths may be disastrous to the unbalanced. Those who seek to talk with their dead will find their answer within themselves, if they have loved truly. Those who seek for a reply from without are in deadly peril. The author of "The Tree of Life" seeks to obscure counsel by identifying Magic with Mysticism. They are forever enemies and opposites. Magic fights to obtain from outside the self the answer to the riddle of existence. Mysticism accepts the universe and finds the answer in the depths of the divine self.

# The Pacifist

By Sir Lionel Haworth

**T**HE professed pacifist is a danger to world peace. Thus spake Mussolini at Turin.

The statement is interesting, and by a coincidence the same day that the speech was reported there was held in London a discussion—previously advertised—on "Pacifism—a Danger to World Peace?"

The pronouncements of the pacifists in England and at Geneva, and the discord which invariably follows their activities, are gradually awakening public opinion to the danger of ill-digested, ill-informed thought on the part of people who act and think purely on emotion, who reject all fact and all evidence. Yet the pacifists are powerful. It is then interesting and useful for those who desire peace, to analyse the conditions which produce this form of thought.

### Honest But Dangerous

Let us first realise that the pacifist does honestly desire peace. He is dangerous but not intentionally so. His actions are, on the surface, dictated by the highest ethics.

The philosopher must always wonder at the contradictory opinions which are formed by men from the same facts; if he is also a psychologist he knows that opinions are not in the mass founded upon facts at all. They are in embryo before the facts become known, and this applies, though in varying measure, to the best of us. Each of us has a mental mould, the material of which is inherent in us (heredity) while the shape is given by the circumstances in which we have lived or have been educated, or by the mass opinion of the peoples surrounding us or the country in which we live (environment).

Thus we accept or reject evidence largely as it fits, or does not fit into our mould—a mould which is fairly constant but which does vary in form according to the material and the pressure received. The wise man knows this and discounts his tendencies in his search for truth. But the pacifist is rarely a wise man—he may be clever, he may be cute, but one thing he is not: he is not judicial.

His favourite boast is that "he backs the underdog." Not, it will be observed, that he desires justice for the underdog. His outlook is not one of justice—it is one of sympathy. In his sympathy he does not test which side is in the right or the wrong, he seeks only the advantage of the underdog.

This helps to explain the curious inconsistencies which appear so often in him. He will back the criminal (he is very fond of the criminal) even against justice. That great body of psychologists, the Roman Catholic Church, have ordained penance as part of repentance; the pacifist desires to make punishment pleasant. He is a strong partisan, "backing" one country against another according to his "sympathies." Frequently his

sympathies are with Russia, even though Russia violates every decent principle for which, in other circumstances, he will condemn the offender. If he is a pro-Russian he will demand disarmament for England, for France; probably he will wish to re-arm Germany, but he will never demand disarmament for Russia.

He will condemn the wicked national spirit in England. He is where England is concerned an inter-nationalist, but he will passionately demand nationality for Ireland and for India and for any country which is opposed to England. He will thus in the same breath curse this silly and out-of-date national spirit in his own country and passionately condemn us for "crushing" the national spirit of countries under our rule.

In the name of peace he will demand (indignantly demand) warlike action against those who offend against his desires. In the name of civilisation he will oppose (indignantly oppose) all action which promotes civilisation in backward countries. His demands are always "indignant," "passionate"; they are emotional, they require the use of adjectives, his opponents are "bloody," "damnable," "satanic."

### Catchwords

How, when facts are so strongly against him, does he get a following? By skilfully using his emotions to fit on to catchwords which are in tune with the age-long attributes of the British people. Peace—the British are a slow-blooded people who desire peace for their trade. Freedom—that great word which has made England also great and which America (where the pacifist abounds) has inherited and adopted. Thus especially he catches the young who have not the experience to test his statements. The English as a race do not analyse.

What would the psychologist say of the pacifist? He would diagnose him as a Narcissus-minded man, full of self pity, a quality which he uses objectively on objects in which subconsciously he finds an analogy to his own condition. Self-pity is notoriously dangerous and the cause of quarrels; it is super-sensitive to the opinions of others, it avoids all fact, it is unbalanced. The pacifist equally shuts his eyes to facts, he is super-sensitive to what other countries may think, his outlook is purely emotional, he is unbalanced.

Those who desire peace, and most of us do so, should be aware of him. He is, as Mussolini says, a menace to the world's peace.

If your friends find difficulty in obtaining the *Saturday Review* from their newsagents, ask them to send a postcard to The Publisher, *Saturday Review*, 18-20 York Buildings, Adelphi, W.C.2.

## NEW NOVELS

REVIEWED BY ANNE ARMSTRONG.

*The Triumph of Time.* By Storm Jameson. Heinemann. 8s. 6d.

*Afternoons in Utopia.* By Stephen Leacock. Bodley Head. 5s.

*Mary Dallon.* By Herbert Asquith. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.

**P**ROPHECY, I reflected as I put down the Storm Jameson trilogy, is definitely one of the dangerous trades. Five or six years ago every literary critic would have proclaimed Miss Rose Macaulay or Miss Sheila Kaye Smith as the leading woman novelist of the day, with Miss Storm Jameson far in the rear as a brilliant but nevertheless admitted failure. How entirely things have changed since then! Miss Macaulay has lost her lead, largely because she has too little sympathy to make her characters live. Miss Kaye Smith has ceased to write, or at least to publish; has Sussex run dry of plot or persons, or has she simply thrown fiction out of her life like an old shoe? I do not know; but it is certain that Miss Storm Jameson has now beaten them both, in quantity and quality, in value and significance.

Her development in style and technique these last ten years has been astonishing. "The Pot Boils," her first novel (at any rate the first novel of hers that I have struck) was strong stuff, or rather it had the elements of strength. But it was crude and heady, like new wine made from grapes grown on too strong soil, and not properly matured; it failed. At least I presume it failed, for I bought a copy for a shilling at a second-hand bookseller's shop some time ago, and the proprietor—a seedy over-anxious little man—more than hinted that I could have any additional copies I wanted at a handsome reduction.

Apparently Miss Jameson accepted the adverse verdict, for "The Pot Boils" is not even mentioned in the short list of works by the author on the front page of "The Triumph of Time." But she has learned from her critics, or more probably from experience, since those days. The forced brilliance, which became rather dazzling and in the end tedious, has vanished; there is no longer any straining after effect in her mature work.

The crudeness and headiness have gone, the strength remains, and what was at first mere ebullience and effervescence has now become transmuted into bigness of conception and execution.

"The Triumph of Time" is a very considerable achievement—the story of a family of shipbuilders in Whitby over a hundred years of ups and downs (mostly ups) and a study in progress and inventions that have transformed ships and all other forms of transport from the primitive to the scientific but have left the human beings that fashioned them very much human beings still. There is as much history here as in Mr. Hugh Walpole's record of the Herries family, but Miss Jameson wears her learning with a difference. The one seems a little inclined to drag it in, just as if he wanted to show you how much he knows; the other makes it part

of the story, and though it adds to the length—there are 1,177 pages to this trilogy—you will not, if you are wise, wish any of it away. It seems as natural, and as inevitable, as the songs and chanties scattered up and down the chapters.

Altogether it is a great theme, and nobly handled. It is the fashion to write family chronicles to-day, and every novelist worth the name has a *Forsyte Saga* in his bureau. Miss Storm Jameson is the only one of the younger generation who has pulled it off.

A new book from the pen of Mr. Stephen Leacock is always a joy and those who open it in happy anticipation of a Sunday afternoon spent chuckling over pages of ironic nonsense will not be disappointed.

Nonsense there is in plenty.

For instance ". . . let me ask you this Mr. Buncom. Let us suppose that Mary Jones is twenty years old and that Mary Jones is twice as old as Anne Jones was when Mary Jones was as old as Anne Jones is now. How old is Anne Jones?"

And yet—as I read further I begin to have an uncomfortable feeling that in spite of all this nonsense "Afternoons in Utopia" is something more than a series of Mr. Leacock's inimitably humourous essays. That he writes always with his tongue in his cheek and pokes fun at all our faults and foibles is what we expect and enjoy, but here the satire is deeper, the irony more biting than ever before. Is Mr. Leacock perhaps more serious in this book than a mere cursory glance can reveal? I don't know—but my joy in reading it became tempered by fear. Fear lest some of his Utopias may—one day—come true.

But alas and alack the spirit of humour and friendly nonsense on that Sunday afternoon (so carefully nursed by Mr. Leacock) was entirely ruined and dissipated by Mr. Herbert Asquith and his "Mary Dallon".

Mary and her sailor father tramp the roads of England with their performing bear. They are a rather delightful pair and so far so good. Mr. Asquith certainly starts off well. And then? The story becomes more and more improbable. Young John Rivers sees Mary and falling in love with her invites daughter and father and bear to stay at the Rivers' ancestral home. Lady Rivers takes it all as a matter of course and Mary is put into the best bedroom with a huge four poster bed (Mary, of course, is a little awed because she has been "in service" prior to staying with the county) and faded green brocade and gilded cupids.

The sailor father also takes it all for granted although the butler becomes faintly ironical when he asks for more fish. Mary goes back into service as a house-keeper after her visit and "keeps company" with George. But the story had to take a turn for the better somewhere so John Rivers (having already slept with Mary when she was visiting Lady Rivers) decides he really rather likes Mary and will marry her. He does and she is pleased, and her father takes the bear off and continues to show him up and down England.

To my mind an incredibly impossible and stupid story.

**THE AUTHOR OF "VATHEK"**

*The Life of William Beckford.* By J. W. Oliver. Humphrey Milford. 12s. 6d.

(REVIEWED BY WILLIAM KING)

M<sup>R</sup>. Oliver's Life of Beckford is a work of capital importance to all who are interested in that wayward genius, for he is the first reliable writer who has had both full access to the Duke of Hamilton's papers and the opportunity of publishing his discoveries in detail.

Similar facilities were once, it is true, afforded to Mr. Lewis Melville, whose biography was issued in 1910, but although it has for some time been apparent that Mr. Melville's attributions in the matter of the portraits that he illustrated were generally mistaken in the person either of the painter or the subject and that his attitude towards the evidence that exists regarding Beckford's sexual aberrations was misleading in the extreme, it only now appears that his quotations from the Hamilton papers were frequently the product of wanton carelessness and flagrant ignorance.

Mr. Oliver is too kind to say more than that Mr. Melville's "text bears evidence of rather hurried transcription," and it would be waste of time to add more here than that a comparison of the two lives reveals that Mr. Melville was actually capable in a description of Florence of rendering the two proper nouns in "the Woods of Boboli . . . behind the Palazzo Pitti" as respectively "Bobbio" and "Frith."

Beckford should be sufficiently well-known to-day as the author of two enduring literary masterpieces, *Vathek* and *Alcobaça and Batalha*, as a millionaire who spent a fortune on Fonthill and its treasures, now alas! dispersed, and as an unpleasantly tyrannical father, to render it unnecessary to do more here than to note the two contributions of primary importance that Mr. Oliver gives us. The letters written from Paris in 1784 are one, and the chapter which contains them can be recommended to any student of English literature, eighteenth-century social life or the contemporary reputation of the Marquis de Sade; but what is of even more interest to the psychologist is the fact that these letters are transcribed from copies made fifty years later for Beckford himself, who records that he used to read them aloud in his old age for the delectation of a favoured few, and that there is no evidence that the originals were ever despatched, although they were written to Louisa Beckford, his cousin's wife, who had loved him not wisely but too well.

Louisa's letters to Beckford are the other contribution to which we have already referred as rendering Mr. Oliver's book of singular importance, and it is no exaggeration to say that as a body of material dealing with the ravages of unrequited passion upon the dark recesses of the human heart they are fully as moving and as disturbing to the reader of sensibility as the unique and terrifying series written half a century earlier by Esther Vanhomrigh to Swift.

Louisa at least appears to have had the partial satisfaction of sharing Beckford's pre-nuptial favours with the young William Courtney, afterwards Earl of Devon, and to have happily accepted

her equivocal position, but Beckford's sudden wedding was a bitter blow and they never met again; she died fairly soon after and he survived her for more than fifty years.

Mr. Oliver unfortunately makes no reference to the signally interesting letter quoted by Mr. Melville as having been written to Louisa from Rome on June 30, 1782, but his assertion that a reference to "Kitty" in another letter to Louisa was probably meant for Courtenay emboldens the suggestion that the unnamed girl to whom Beckford refers in the Rome letter as having previously been "led bounding like a Kid to my Chamber" can scarcely have been other than the same unpleasant little boy. "Marcia," the confidante of this strange three-cornered intrigue, who is mentioned on pages 131 and 144, was actually not Louisa's maid, as Mr. Oliver suggests, but her younger sister, who afterwards became Mrs. Lane Fox.

**MOLLISON AND AMY**

*Death Cometh Soon or Late.* By J. A. Mollison. Hutchinson. 10s. 6d.

M<sup>O</sup>LLISON and Amy in the air! Mollison and Amy in a book! Mollison and Amy should look out, lest the fate of Aristides overtake them. We at least will not vote for banishment. Unlike quite a number of other "stunt" and record artists we can think of supplied by both sexes, this sterling pair do it all with a simplicity and a frankness that disarms the carping critic. Indeed we should in this book relish a little more of Mrs. Mollison, who merely contributes a preface. No matter: her husband by himself is good fun enough, and there is time and to spare for many a book about her still.

Mr. Mollison's title is not borne out by his book, in the sense that he has no sinister gloatings over the risk that by the nature of things attaches to his profession. Neither is he specially lighthearted, giving rather the impression that flying is a very sober, serious business and success at it dependent less on dash and imagination than on steady, cool attention to business. In this Mr. Mollison is clearly true to the type distinguishable in his great predecessors and rivals Lindbergh and Costes.

Two of the most interesting passages in the book, which fairly bristles with good reading, concern Mr. Mollison's abandonment of his return flight from America—it was perhaps hardly realised at the time what violent pressure was required to make him give in—and his reflection on Atlantic flying in general. The great obstacle, according to him, to the development of anything like a commercial air line over the Atlantic is the weather, so bad above the Banks that on nine out of ten days it must make flying dangerous. Only multi-engined, seaworthy aeroplanes fitted with wireless, in his judgment, can give practical results. The ordinary observer however can hardly refrain from a shudder at thinking of the chances of a "seaworthy" plane forced down on to Atlantic rollers in a storm. Those who have enjoyed Mr. Mollison's book will certainly hope that he may not be the one to make the experiment.

### A WOMAN AND A FRIEND

*Lord Thomson of Cardington.* A Memoir and Some Letters. By Princess Marthe Bibesco. Jonathan Cape. 7s. 6d.

**T**HREE was a wonderful friendship between Lord Thomson and Princess Marthe Bibesco, and the greatest tribute that can be paid to this book is to say, that no man has a right to ask more of life than that, when that life is ended, his friend should so write about him.

Lord Thomson figured in the greatest experiment and one of the greatest disasters of his time : he was the Air Minister in a Socialist Government, and he died in the blazing wreckage of the R 101.

The book that his friend has written about him is a rather wonderful one. She begins at the end and this is how she does it :

" On a hill-side not far from a place called Crève-Cœur, near Beauvais, in France, there lies a copse which the hares have made their own. It is called the Bois d'Allone. There, during the blustery night of the 4th—5th of October 1930, prowled a poacher, sure of running into no gamekeeper in such weather—' Weather not fit to let a dog out in,' as he was later to say in London, before the Commission of Enquiry into the disaster of the R 101.

" That night he saw what no human eye had ever seen : a vessel like the nave of a church both in size and shape, came swaying through the air towards him. He fancied it must be the cathedral of Beauvais itself, carried off by this storm at the devil's bidding, for the vast thing was flying and was flooded with light, as if some solemn office for the dead were being celebrated within. And then the lights were quenched, all together ; a mighty noise filled earth and sky ; the woodland was lighted up to its farthest recesses. And in second that cathedral of the air, smashed against the hill-side, was ablaze."

That shows that Princess Marthe Bibesco can write ; but fine as her writing is it is the least compelling part of the book. She takes her reader through some of the war's episodes which are made extraordinarily illuminating by Lord Thomson's letters ; but even then she has not touched the great part of the book : that comes when she fulfils what she, perhaps mistakenly, calls her " task," which is " to identify him, to recognise him, to bring him forth by the powers of memory from one of those eight-and-forty nameless coffins. . . ."

It is a task which she accomplishes in a very moving way.

Among many quite remarkable passages in the book is one which stands out alone. She had not known the date of the departure of the airship. But :

" The night of the 4th—5th of October, exactly at the hour my friend lost his life, I felt a pain at my heart which was so violent, so inexplicable, and so persistent that, at the end of an hour's struggling with myself, I had to waken the servants and send for a doctor. Then in spite of sedatives I did not sleep all night. With daylight the pain ceased and never returned. The 5th of October was a Sunday ; in the country, where I was staying, the post and the telephone do not function on Sundays, and it was only on the following day, Monday, at nine o'clock in the morning, twenty-eight hours after, that I heard of the catastrophe. Everyone in the house was struck by the coincidence which seemed to have made me a sort of receiver for some mortal distress that I could not otherwise suffer or share during that fatal night."

Princess Marthe Bibesco confesses that she had to " withstand certain influences emanating from these obscure regions into which I had always been reluctant to venture. I, too, had received messages after the wireless apparatus of the R 101 had ceased to function . . . ."

All this and many other things make extremely interesting reading, but the real thing about the book is that it has achieved its object, in that it has " brought him forth by the powers of memory from one of those eight-and-forty nameless coffins."

It is not a question of a Princess writing about a Peer. A woman has written about a friend. And she has done it well.

### A VIOLENT GERMAN

*France and Germany.* The History of One Thousand Years. By Professor Johannes Haller. Translated by Dora von Beseler. Constable. 7s. 6d.

**A**NYONE believing in German pacifism should read this book carefully. He will not need the note of barely veiled menace on which it ends to make his hair rise on end as he realises that the author of this tendentious tract declares himself to hold moderate views and to be a lover of peace. It is a natural and perhaps eminently proper book for a German to have written, but it should not pose as impartial.

It would be difficult to over-estimate the degree of envy, hatred, and all uncharitableness exhaled from Professor Haller's pages whenever he thinks of the historic French claim to the Rhine as the natural boundary of France that runs as a *leitmotiv* through the centuries. He is filled with a positive detestation of Louis XIV. He can write of " the scorpion discipline of French rule " in Germany after Jena, whereas in fact there was little attempt at rule and none at all at discipline. France's actions have for him always been inspired by immoderate thirst for conquest, and the various projects for a League of Nations, including that of Sully, are mere concealed engines for creating French hegemony in Europe. Professor Haller justifies German policy after 1870 up to the hilt, and is a wholehearted believer in the *Einkreisungsplan* or project (by England and France) for hostile encirclement of Germany, that patriotic—and moderate, *teste* Professor Haller—Germans see as the origin of the war of 1914. This description of Professor Haller's book might be thought exaggerated ; but he fortunately provides a complete test of his own attitude. Writing of Alsace-Lorraine, he says—italicising the words so that there may be no mistake—" For Germany the strongest possible protection of the frontier was an imperative necessity of defence ; on the lips of French statesmen it was the pretext and cloak for aggressive intentions of every kind."

In this sentence is revealed precisely the mentality that held it a matter of imperative defence for Germany to invade Belgium, whose neutrality she had solemnly guaranteed. We can only be grateful to Professor Haller for so definitely showing us that the 1914 German spirit is to-day as much alive as ever.

### THE MYSTERY OF MONEY

*Modern Money.* By Lord Melchett. Secker. 10s. 6d. Reviewed by P. C. Loftus.

**T**HIS book should be read by all interested in the present economic chaos. It shows courage and imagination. The author recognises that the present monetary system has broken down: "The real truth is that the whole monetary system is not only unsound but unworkable." And again he writes: "The attempt to control world economics through a series of currencies theoretically exchangeable by the medium of gold is doomed to failure. . . . I am sure that the wit and need of man will devise something better."

Throughout the book occur phrases provocative of thought. "Gold is the only commodity of which there is a shortage and which is from a practical point of view the most useless of all prime commodities." He stresses the importance of the home market: "It is better to have a factory to supply a given territory regularly than to have a factory with a largely fluctuating world trade." He disagrees with a pessimistic argument which is to-day a bar to all financial reform, namely, that "International finance can only be settled by International co-operation."

And he has the courage to warn unthinking optimists: "Those who presume to take the responsibility for the management of the world's affairs must not fool themselves because of the results of England's 1931 Election, or the 1932 Conversion, that the human race will for ever tolerate their folly. It is not only our duty to reform the economic system, but if we do not the people will themselves make changes. That way lies disaster."

His proposals for reform rest on the idea of two separate currencies; one—not based on gold but on securities—for domestic use (he points out quite truly, "A bank-note to-day is in reality a sight draught on the British Government for goods and services in England"); the other based upon gold which would be used only for international trade and foreign exchange. Many will not agree with the details of his proposals, especially as he relies on the theory that there is a permanent 3 per cent. annual increase of the world's real wealth. Actually the increase must be more variable.

The immense acceleration of labour-saving machinery in the last three years must have increased potential output by considerably more than 3 per cent. per annum, and it is possible that science may soon be able to apply certain ideas, now in the experimental stage, which might increase the world's wealth at a very much greater rate.

He also proposes some check to violent fluctuations of commodity prices by forming a large reserve of stocks. He discusses Empire development, the systems in Italy and Russia, and he outlines a scheme for a supreme economic council to be set up under the authority of Parliament.

The book, therefore, covers a wide, possibly too wide, field. It is marred by the suggestion that we should hand over some or all of our West Indian colonies to the United States in settlement of the war debt. It is also difficult to understand

how one who writes, "There is no object in all this machinery unless it is going to give man not only wealth but leisure" and who recognises that "the Great War has enriched mankind through the progress of scientific and mechanical invention" and who clearly sees that "we are living in an age of plenty, and increasing plenty," should suggest almost casually that birth control must be an essential part of future policy.

Still, a useful book, packed with ideas, which will help to make people realise that all may not be for the best in what they have hitherto considered the best of all monetary systems.

### BYAM SHAW AND HIS WORK

*The Art and Life of Byam Shaw.* By Rex Vicat Cole. Illustrated. Seeley Service Co. 21s.

**I**T is nearly fourteen years since Byam Shaw's death, at the age of forty-six, closed a career whose early promise had already borne much fruit, and it would, indeed, have been a pity if we had been left without a permanent record of the man and his work apart from his pictures in public galleries and private collections all over the world. Such a record is now to hand in the life of the artist written by his old friend and colleague, Rex Vicat Cole, who brings to his task a complete knowledge of his subject, combined with the appreciation of a fellow artist.

The life thus chronicled is an uneventful one, but we are given a picture of an eminently sane, healthy-minded, cheerful Briton whose intense earnestness and enthusiasm for his art never led him towards preciousness or obscured his keen sense of humour. Byam Shaw, indeed, was a man singularly devoid of conceit, and to those who knew him best his attitude of unaffected humility towards his own work was one of his most endearing qualities.

In writing of such a man it is not surprising that his biographer has had to rely upon the recording of little things, seemingly trivial in themselves, for the building up of an impression of a lovable personality. Mr. Vicat Cole's style is simple and straightforward, but he is earnest that we should see the human side of his subject as his friends saw it, and in this task his pen has served him well.

In one chapter the author rides atilt against the critics of a former day, some of whom abused his hero in unmeasured terms, and he devotes a page or two to Press extracts in which acrid comment and generous praise are strangely contrasted, while in one instance four writers severally discovered in the same picture the influence of Italian art, of the Flemish School, of Frith and Macrise and of Edwin A. Abbey! The artist was often charged with attempting to mystify the public; but this was, in fact, the last thing that he desired.

The many illustrations to the work are excellent, though, naturally, large canvases containing many figures painted with a wealth of detail suffer from the limitations of space. The richness of Byam Shaw's black-and-white work and the fine draughtsmanship of his studies are, however, fully apparent.

## A Short Guide to New Books

*In Queer Street.* By William Roughead. W. Green and Son. 10s. 6d.

Mr. Roughead is without doubt the greatest recounter of Scottish trials; he has the facility for giving all the details of a law court sensation without, in the process, losing anything from either the colour or the drama. In this latest and well illustrated volume he begins with a remarkable 1931 case in which the issue is whether strangulation has been murderous or suicidal, and then he suddenly jumps back a century or two to the tale of Andrew Merrilles, after which he leaps about among the years and the famous trials like a frog fitted with a reverse gear. But a highly knowledgeable and entertaining frog. And one who writes extraordinarily well.

*Words and Names.* By E. Weekley. Murray. 5s.

In this volume Professor Weekley deals with the part played by proper names in the foundation of our vocabulary, and produces an abundance of material to show that their share in the creation of language has been under-estimated by etymologists. The wisest will find here much to learn. Who could state offhand the origin of Mrs. Grundy? Tom Morton's comedy "Speed the Plough" (1798), whence she comes, has been long forgotten. "Mr. Bowler of 15, St. Swithin's Lane" was the begetter of the felt hat called a "bowler." An equally strange freak has immortalised Miss Sally Lunn, who cried the bread named after her at Bath about 1780. The book closes with a chapter on the derivation of the name Shakespeare. Dr. Weekley arrives at the conclusion surprising in etymology that its origin is straightforward—the name is what it looks, Shakespeare—and quotes a wealth of parallels.

*The Common Earth.* By E. L. Grant Watson. Dent. 5s.

These essays on English country life formed part of the B.B.C. programme and they well deserve to appear in permanent form. Mr. Grant Watson, if sometimes he is inclined to be carried away by the intoxication of his own words, writes of the country and the birds, beasts and flowers with deep understanding and subtle insight. Every town-dweller will be refreshed by reading this book and every right-minded boy should learn from it the secret of sympathetic observation.

*Youth Looks at the World.* By Basil A. Fletcher. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

Mr. Fletcher has actually looked at the world. He has travelled right round it and sets down his experiences in this book. It is not a large book, and therein lies the danger. Its author attempts too much; he only just avoids a sort of Political Geography. The book is crowded. Mr. Fletcher had many delightful experiences as he toured around. He had a very jolly time. Everyone was very kind to him, and he sets it all down in a modest, unassuming sort of way—yet the book

lacks the flavour of fine adventure that a book by a young man wandering in strange places, should possess.

*Africa Notwithstanding.* By Kenneth Bradley. Lovat Dickson. 8s. 6d.

Mr. Kenneth Bradley was for many years a District Officer in Rhodesia, and in this book he has collected four capital yarns of the native life among which he lived and which he largely directed. The stories are well told and have the ring of truth and understanding, but the chief value of the book lies in its introduction. It is worth buying for this alone. Mr. Bradley knows his country and his people and in a fine piece of writing he summarises his knowledge. "We cannot foretell how real civilisation will come to Africa. It may not be a Western civilisation at all. It may be an African civilisation, I rather hope it will be. The African is a virile creature and eventually he is likely to drive the white man into the sea." You may contest Mr. Bradley's conclusions but you must respect them.

*The Appreciation of Architecture.* By R. Byron. Wishart. 5s.

*Scrutiny of Cinema.* By W. Hunter. Wishart. 5s. *Theatre Prospect.* By T. Guthrie. Wishart. 5s.

These three attractive volumes are the first of the Adelphi Quartos, a series of illustrated essays on the arts and activities of modern life. They are nicely printed and the illustrations are well reproduced and admirably chosen. Mr. Byron on Architecture is stimulating and convincing. Architecture is, he argues, primarily a visual art, and the original architects drew their inspiration from the forms provided by natural surroundings. The artistic form of any building may be analysed in terms of light, and light varies profoundly in different countries, so that the form and material of architecture must always be judged in relation to the problems of light they are designed to overcome.

Mr. Hunter deals with the Cinema without favour or prejudice and his attempt to set up a standard of values for this new art provides a basis that may be recommended to all who are interested in the film. He is a severe critic, but no educated person could question the justice of his criticisms and he is quick to appreciate every sign of progress from the crudity of Hollywood to a novel representation of life.

In "Theatre Prospect" Mr. Guthrie puts forward a theory as to the relation between stage and audience, on which, he suggests, the future of the stage as opposed to the film must be founded. He sees ahead of us a reaction from rationalism and bourgeoisie, in other words "a revival of romance, with poets again discovering intimations of immortality, and seeing in the material world around them the symbols of a universe more real, although unseen."

The Adelphi Quartos are books that all true lovers of art should read.

**HERE AND BEYOND**

*"The Truth About Spiritualism."* By C. E. Bechhofer Roberts. Eyre & Spottiswoode. 8s. 6d.

**A** CLAIM for truth is always large, if not extravagant; and a claim to set at rest, by reason and analysis, all the doubts of human minds about that truly border-line subject called for short "spiritualism" must seem to many a fantastic claim.

But Mr. Bechhofer Roberts has gone a long way towards the justification of his claim and he has written a well-balanced, painstaking, conscientious and vitally interesting book in which all the issues—faith, fraud, evidence, and explanation—are summed up. His conclusion is final. There is no truth in spiritualism as such; there is, in séance or medium, no evidence of the survival of the spirit after death; there is in all of it nothing that cannot be explained by telepathy, self-deception, fraud or neurosis. And the fact that he reaches his conclusion by a patient and quite impartial rehearsal of all the salient claims and evidence, and records it with a sympathetic and even regretful respect, will not soften much the blows of anger likely to be aimed at him. Whether he is right in believing that the cult of spiritualism is on the wane, that in the future neither great names nor great intellects will be found in its ranks, and that it has been killed by its own product, psychical research, seems to us not only doubtful but ill-reasoned.

The whole issue seems to the reviewer incapable of proof—like the doctrine of a creed. What belongs to the spirit and what belongs to the brain are as far sundered as the tribute which is due to Cæsar and the service to God. As Mr. Roberts observes, spiritualism flourishes as a means of consolation, a message of hope, a new revelation, more easy and more alluring to a desolate world or a stricken heart than the harder forms and more exacting demands of the Christian faith without such trappings. And the evidence which Mr. Roberts sets out and dissects, from the Witch of Endor through the astonishing Home to the latest examples of a mediumistic gift, is so absorbing that the justice of his conclusion will surely seem to many of trivial importance by comparison with the strange fantastic occurrences which he recounts so admirably.

Well, here is the book. It is careful, sane, complete; it is a study of the subject neither influenced by favour nor distorted by malice; it should certainly be read. For if perchance we must "evermore come out by the same door as in we went," it does pose for us the progress in study and make preparation for a scientific knowledge which may separate from fraud and self-hypnosis a power of some sort which has its feet probably on the physical ground.

**Next Week's Broadcasting**

IT was almost inevitable that next week's programmes should seem a trifle tame when compared with the somewhat hectic birthday celebrations which we have been attending during the past week. Fortunately, however, apart from

the staple programmes, one or two tit-bits have been left over from the party.

The fifth Sunday Orchestral Concert will be heard on Nov. 20th, at 9.30 p.m. (Regional); the sixth Symphony Concert takes place on Nov. 23rd, at 8.15 p.m. (National); and there is the first of a series of Concerts of Contemporary music on Nov. 25th, at 9.00 p.m. (Regional).

Apart from this the "Roosters" return to the microphone on Nov. 21st, at 8.00 p.m. (National); Sir Thomas Beecham conducts the London Philharmonic Orchestra at the Queen's Hall on Nov. 24th, at 8.15 p.m. (Regional); Jack Payne makes a welcome return to the microphone for one hour on Nov. 26th, at 8.00 p.m. (National); and there are two new plays, "The Last Watch," and "The Fourth Man" (Nov. 23rd, 9.40 p.m. Regional, and Nov. 24th, 8.25 p.m., National).

In the first of these, which deals with the Dreyfus affair, the adapter is employing two "Narrators." It is earnestly to be hoped that he is not returning to the practice of unfolding his tale by means of a strophe and antistrophe. Nothing is more irritating and confusing to the listener than to hear a sentence begun by one person completed by an entirely different voice. This method has been tried over and over again and has never been really successful. Still, the play should be interesting if only on account of the subject with which it deals and its excellent cast.

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## Novels in Brief

*Sister of the Sun.* By Sonia Keppel. Chapman & Hall. 7s. 6d.

The author informs us that the goddess Diana was affiliated with Selene, sister of the Sun, but the reviewer is in the dark as to why she should have chosen her title. He can discern very little resemblance between her heroine and the "queen and huntress chaste and fair." Be that as it may, she has written a good and thoughtful novel which holds the attention. It is a vivid picture, contrasting the old order and the new, as they were divided by the War.

Georgia Fane is brought up in an Edwardian middle class household with a selfish mother she detests and a pleasant, rather ineffective father whom she adores. Her father is killed in the war and, without compass or lode-star, she hurls herself into the treacherous whirlpools of the world-rending peace. Tossed this way and that, she finds no haven and, with all her follies, she is so lovable that it is hard to forgive her creator for leaving her comfortless. For there is no salvation in the aeroplane in which she tries to fly from herself. The care that sat pillionwise on Horace's galloping horse cannot be outstripped by mechanical speed and the only hope for Georgia, who is left starting on a solo flight to Africa, is to break her neck.

"Sister of the Sun" is a novel which stands out notably from most of its contemporaries; for its characters are finely drawn and its expression of the tragedy of our time grips the reader with the strength of truth.

*The Devil in the Pulpit.* By Elliott O'Donnell. Denis Archer. 7s. 6d.

The "ghost-hunter" (a title to which Mr. O'Donnell has a good claim) has lived up to it in this book. Here are his ingredients: A hypnotic Devil Rock, an accursed family, three mysterious deaths, a good clergyman and his young, beautiful and rather gay wife. That means you have a right to expect something very thrilling and mysterious, and you get it. Cooked to a turn and served admirably.

*Winged Horses.* By R. Chance. Lovat Dickson. 7s. 6d.

This story of Athens in the 5th century B.C. takes its title from the great myth of the chariot of the soul in Plato's *Phædrus* and opens with a fine quotation from Robert Bridges' "Testament of Beauty." Plato, Socrates, Alcibiades wander through its pages, and there is a great deal of philosophical discussion. This curious compound of echoes from Plato and modern notions has little to recommend it: it succeeds in being as dull as the most arid sections of the *Dialogues*, when Socrates persists in asking questions which seem to the modern to require no answer. It is peculiarly aggravating to stumble across favourite passages torn perhaps from the *Symposium* or the *Phædo*, set out in English without a trace of Plato's magic, cheek by jowl with such an anachronism as a Socratic question concerning "the pragmatic truths of science."

*Royal Exchange.* By H. M. Raleigh. Methuen. 7s. 6d.

This extravaganza is high-spirited enough to appeal to those who like that kind of thing, though there is nothing very original in the idea and its working out is obvious. A queen of a mythical country, a lady of pleasure-loving propensities, changes places with her double, a strait-laced tyrant of a country village, with results that can be foreseen. The kingdom is goaded to madness by the prohibitions of their substitute queen, and the village is equally shattered by the licence and confusion introduced into their affairs by the gay sovereign masquerading as the ruler of Maiden Pugsleigh.

*White Windows.* By Emily Heaton. Lincoln Williams. 7s. 6d.

Miss Heaton claims a knowledge and understanding of the Brontë family denied to most, and she uses them as the background of a novel.

But nothing new emerges and her novel, with this rather transparent framework of fact, falls lamentably short either of a novel or of a picture of the Brontë's. Quite one half of the book has no connection with the other, and the bewildered reader is left without a single idea of what the story is about.

*The Long Shadow.* By Anthony Gilbert. Collins. 7s. 6d.

An old French hag lives alone in a filthy Westminster slum. One morning she does not emerge from her squalid room to take in her milk. Murder! And the murder reveals that the wretch was what remained of the greatest actress of the previous generation. Who killed Mlle. Roget, and why? These are the questions that Mr. Gilbert's detective-lawyer sets out to answer. It is a redoubtable mystery, told with skill of composition and an unusually finished style. No one can fail to be thrilled by the dead woman's personality that haunts and dominates the book. Mr. Gilbert is to be congratulated on doing it with a difference.

*Tethered Dragons.* By Sylvia Stevenson. Rich & Cowan. 7s. 6d.

Miss Stevenson has written an excellent novel which has a strange fascination alike in its atmosphere and the delicate humour with which its characters are painted. A young man named Bernard, who in the freshness of his youth and inexperience commands sympathy despite more than a touch of priggishness, comes to a wild island near the English coast and tries to express his ideas of progress by developing it into a fashionable resort. What he learns from the failure of his schemes in the face of the hostility of the natives is relatively nothing to the sentimental education provided by his love for Bliss, the enigmatic wife of an eccentric composer. "Si jeunesse savait" is a phrase of which he learns the meaning by bitter experience, and it is only after a pilgrimage through disappointment that he gains the power of laughing at himself.

"Tethered Dragons" is a work of art which should not be ordered from the circulating library but purchased as a permanent possession.

## The Saturday Acrostics

### New Series

We offer a prize of a book for the first correct solution opened.

#### RULES

**RULES.**—(1) The book chosen must be named when the solution is sent in and must be selected from the books reviewed in the current issue. (2) The price of the book must not exceed half-a-guinea. (3) Envelopes must be marked "ACROSTIC" and addressed to the ACROSTIC EDITOR, Saturday Review, 18-20, York Buildings, Adelphi, W.C.2. (4) Solutions must reach us by first post on the Thursday following the date of publication.

#### DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 9.

SEA-GIRDLED ROCKS FAMED WHEN OUR WORLD WAS YOUNG;

THE PORTRESS WHO IN THEM LOVED AND SUNG.

1. Behead me first what never should be told.
2. Curtail a quantity—of notes or gold.
3. Tends herds of reindeer mid the arctic cold.
4. Young officer : the title's borne no more.
5. Of savoury jelly please extract the core.
6. The act of consecrating priest's and deacons,
7. And that of lighting, or of kindling, beacons.
8. Talkative, as a parrot or a pie.
9. Exaggerated dread of Muscovy.
10. To catch by guile, in pitfall, gin, or snare.
11. To hug, like loving wife or angry bear.
12. Heard when a Highland chief in death lies low.
13. Heart of gaunt bird, to frogs and eels a foe.

#### DOUBLE ACROSTIC No. 8.

MY FIRST'S A TRIFLE RICH? THEN WITH MY SECOND EAT IT!

IF ROASTED TO A TURN, YOU WILL NOT QUICKLY BEAT IT.

1. Old Egypt's script men read; who held the key?  
"Twas I.
2. Behead what he received who sold his Lord to die.
3. What Danish Hamlet styles "a heaven-kissing hill."
4. How should we come by this if whales were none to kill?
5. In dancing she delights: her Grecian name denotes it.
6. Whose tummy aches with me, a sad affliction votes it,
7. Clip at each end a beast in British woods at home.
8. Heart of what formed the heart of mighty Cæsar's Rome.
9. Occurring here and there, not found in every place.
10. By longest river reached when it has run its race.

#### SOLUTION OF ACROSTIC No. 8.

R	o	s	e	t	t	A <sup>1</sup>
s	O					P <sup>2</sup>
A		I				P
S	p	e	r	m	-	L
T	e	r	p	s	i	E <sup>3</sup>
G	a	s	t	r	i	S
p	O	l	e	c		A
f	O		r			t
S	p	o	r	a	d	U
E	m	b	o	u	ch	rn
						C
						E

<sup>1</sup>The discovery of the Rosetta Stone, now in the British Museum, enabled Champollion to decipher the Egyptian hieroglyphics.

<sup>2</sup>John xiii.26.

<sup>3</sup>Terpsichore means "the dance-enjoying."

The winner of Acrostic No. 7 was "Shrub," to whom a book will be sent. He has chosen "Old Times Afloat," by Colonel C. Field. Melrose, 10s. 6d. Will he please send his name and address?

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### A STRANGE MIXTURE

*The Junior Outline of History.* I. O. Evans.  
Denis Archer. 7s. 6d. net.

THE reader who can overcome his astonishment at the blatant dedication of this book "To H. G. Wells, The Man Who Made History Interesting," and at its childish and inaccurate preface will find the greater part of this book of considerable value for the instruction of the young. It is not better than a great deal of historical summary open to reasonably intelligent boys, but it brings together many of the principal facts in a handy, if not exactly exhilarating form. Such books almost always suffer from the fault of devoting too much space to quite modern history in proportion to previous centuries, and the Junior Outline is no exception.

Naturally, too, the last part is fertile in questionable statements, as for instance that "Drama passed from mere amusement to real helpfulness in the hands of Ibsen and of the brilliant George Bernard Shaw." Mr. Evans does not bring out nearly enough the influence of Greece and of Rome on modern history, and hardly suggests the importance of the Capture of Constantinople in bringing about the Renaissance and the age of discovery. He swallows the German version of the origin of the Great War, that "the nations around (the Germans) made plans to surround them with a ring of alliances," whereas it was the Triple Alliance that provoked the Triple Entente and not the contrary.

It is as absurd to write of Greyhound and Dirt-track racing in a section on Modern Thought as it is unfair to say that "if the spirit of Christianity were really alive, we should soon make short work of the difficulties that lead to poverty and sickness and war."

### ARE THE STARS FALLING?

*Filmland in Ferment.* By E. G. Cousins. Denis Archer. 10s. 6d.

Mr. Cousins has a great many pertinent things to say about the films, the majority of which are not novel. This statement is no reflection upon the author, for all intelligent critics have been hammering the same keys for a considerable time with, so far, precious little result. The reasons are not far to seek; we have no directors of outstanding ability, little screen talent which is of any account that has not been recruited from the stage, and the executives of the industry are quite content to imitate, rather than to try and lead.

Mr. Cousins' two main contentions are that the star system is nearing its end, and that the scenarist, the director and the cutter should be the same person. With regard to the star system, I am afraid the wish is father to the thought. As to his second assertion, no director should allow anyone to cut his picture except himself, and already a good many of them employ their own scenario writers who work along lines which they settle in conference with the director. The root of the trouble lies rather with the producer who will have a finger, and sometimes his whole hand, in every pie.

### FILMS BY MARK FORREST

*Blockade.* Directed by Hugh Crosbie. Marble Arch Pavilion.

*Bird of Paradise.* Directed by King Vidor. New Gallery.

*Smilin' Through.* Directed by Sidney Franklin. Empire.

"**BLOCKADE**," which comes to the Marble Arch Pavilion, has been approved by Admiralty; by that, I suppose, is meant that the British navy has been correctly presented on the high seas. If they approved of the dialogue and the acting, then I am in a fair way to understand why the Battle of Jutland was such a muddle.

The director has been given an excellent background—destroyers, submarines, burning trading ships and, above all, the sea. His story is the tale of the "Q" ships, which did so much towards the end of the war to put an end to the menace to British shipping. There is a chance to do something really worth while with this material, but the picture has been handled in so naive a fashion that the result is likely to do more harm than good to the prestige of the British navy. Apart from these considerations, it does not seem to me that much tact has been shown in presenting this film so near Armistice Day.

Mr. King Vidor, who has directed "*Bird of Paradise*" at the New Gallery, is one of the foremost directors in the cinema, but this film is not one of his happiest efforts. "*Bird of Paradise*" has been revived so often on the stage that the story of the white man who falls in love with the native princess, only to see her sacrificed to the wrath of the volcano, is by now probably familiar to a good many people; what will be novel is the extensive use of unintelligible sounds which are supposed to be the native lingo. There is so much of this hullabaloo that the picture loses all pace, and it is not until Dolores del Rio manages to pick up a good English vocabulary inside a month that the film gets under weigh. That she masters our tongue, instead of the white man, played by John McCrea, mastering hers, is something for which to be thankful. This handling of the dialogue is unfortunate, for the photography is good and the native scenes well constructed.

It is difficult for any actor to give a convincing performance when he is compelled to speak gibberish for any length of time, and the acting suffers accordingly, but Dolores del Rio manages to look beautiful—so does the mountain.

The best acting which London has had the opportunity of seeing for a considerable time is the feature of "*Smilin' Through*," the new picture at the Empire. Norma Shearer plays the part which the other Norma—Talmadge—created in the silent film ten years ago, and with her are Frederick March and Leslie Howard. This trio play the charming, sentimental story for all they are worth, and the result may gain Leslie Howard the gold medal for the year's best performance.

**BACKWARDS—AND FORWARDS TOO**

*"Back to the Coal Standard."* By Captain Bernard Acworth, D.S.O., R.N. Eyre & Spottiswoode. 8s. 6d.

**C**APTAIN Acworth has charm, character, and courage. He has also the Big Idea. Whether the Idea is one of those startling revelations thrust upon one mind or just an obsession or merely a bee buzzing in an intellectual bonnet is a question that the lay reviewer cannot answer. The worst of it is, perhaps, that the rightness or delusion of Captain Acworth's Big Idea could only be proved by trial and error—a proof extremely difficult in the circumstances.

What is the Big Idea? In its sane and simple form it is the substitution of coal for oil as the motive power of our life—at all events our English life. But it carries with it the complementary ideas which cling to it, if one may say so, as barnacles cling to a ship's keel. Driven by his Diesel engine of the Big Idea, Captain Acworth is found arguing strongly in favour of a general return to the simplest life, a frank retardation of the clock, a life of candles, or rushlights, horses, gigs, barouches and—presumably—barter.

It is not an unattractive idea and the remarkable skill in dialectic and persuasive eloquence with which Captain Acworth presents it almost rids a reviewer's mind of its inherent impossibilities. But not quite. When he is asked to regard favourably his journeys to London and about London in a dog-cart instead of in a cheap motor-car, he has to ask himself not only whether he can afford forage and stabling for a horse, but why he should put himself to the expense of a coachman or groom. The life of candles was a good life—how jolly it was to go to bed in a country house when one seized one's silver candle-stick from the hall table—and then lost a collar stud in the bedroom. So was, by many accounts, the life of the eighteenth century. But if magic suddenly drove us back to it, we should "go mad and beat our wives, plunge, after shocking lives, razors and carving knives into our gizzards."

Here Captain Acworth allows himself to be misled or pixie-led. But keep to his main argument, a large substitution of coal (not pulverised coal, or coal-cum-oil, or oil from coal) for oil in the navy and mercantile marine; a reduction of the speed which is waste; a careful plea on strategic and economic grounds for such substitution; a striking examination of the position of the still un-built Cunarders and of the convoy system as applied to tankers; a note on the peace-time wastefulness of tankers; the whole issue in large and small, in general and detail, sifted, analysed, set out with conspicuous fairness and lucidity. And here Captain Acworth is more than well worth study and high consideration. If he has not actually proved his case, he has gone so near it that in any reasonable State his case would be at once submitted not to expert but to impartial judgment of a genuinely national character. That has not been done. Until it is, more power to Captain Acworth's brilliant mind and redoubtable pen.

There is much in this book for disagreement. The position of the horse in agriculture, a great deal of what he writes about railways, and the parrot cry for retrogression. But controversy is the life-blood of achievement. And his courageous criticism of the Trade Unions, of Socialism, sometimes of Toryism, of subsidised motor traffic, and foreign-fed oil control will go straight to the hearts and minds of thousands of readers.

"Back to the Coal Standard" obviously had to be written. And very well written too.

**ENGLISH LIFE**

*Hitchin Worthies.* By Reginald L. Hine. Allen & Unwin. 16s.

**M**MR. HINE'S previous volumes (*The History of Hitchin*) created a stir among literary circles, mostly on account of the panoramic view of English life which his localised history produced. In this new volume, which completes his immense task, the same illusion exists. The Hitchin Worthies seem to expand under Mr. Hine's pen until we can see them as purely typical worthies who would grace any town in England.

This book is a parade of English Life down the years and its chronological arrangement gives a concise and complete picture of most that we hold especially dear in our English hearts. It is a fascinating book, one to treasure and to dip into whenever the spirit moves.

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## CITY.—By C. J. HAMILTON

*Lombard Street, Thursday.*

It is curious to consider how little straight thinking there is on the subject of the War Debts. Such as there is appears rather on the other side of the Atlantic than this. Many people in this country seem to think that our debt to America ought to be forgiven because we borrowed in the main to lend to neighbours from whom we cannot recover. Others demand cancellation on the ground that borrowers and lenders were all engaged in a common cause as allies in the Great War and that America ought to make this sacrifice in wealth as a set off to our greater sacrifice in human life. If the whole world were ordered on the principles of joint family system there might be some justification for such contentions. In point of fact it is not and these contentions become pure sophistry. In the sphere of ordinary business if one man borrows in order to lend to another, who turns out to be a man of straw, no court would accept the plea that the original debt should be cancelled on that account. Or, if A borrows from B before the two go off together for a tiger shoot in which A loses his arm, no one would suggest that B should cancel the debt as a form of compensation.

### Self Interest

There is only one sufficient reason for the modification, or cancellation, of our war debt to America. It is that such a course would be in the best interest of America herself. Whether this is so or not raises a question which is the essence of the problem. It is the question of transfer. In the post war period the world has been brought to the edge of ruin because huge international debts, some long, some short, have been incurred, while the creditor countries have pursued an economic policy which has rendered the discharge of debt impossible. The war debts are not the only, or the most important, examples. When France, having stabilised her currency in 1927, began to withdraw from other nations her great accumulations of short term capital, while at the same time pursuing a monetary policy which subsidised exports and checked imports, she rendered transfer in goods impossible and caused a vast maladjustment of gold.

When America after 1928 reversed the flow of her capital movement, imposing upon the world a "billion dollar transfer problem," while heightening her tariff so as to impede the flow of goods from debtor countries, she rendered the world depression inevitable. During the past year Great Britain, by her departure from gold and her tariff, has "improved" her visible trade balance by reducing imports by a hundred millions. In doing so she has made it impossible for her debtors to pay their dues.

### A Hoover Plan

The war debt problem is thus a species of a large genus. These international debts, whether war debts or any other, are completely incompatible with monetary or tariff policies that render payment impossible. If America wants this debt to be paid

she must make possible that form of payment which is alone compatible with the circumstances of international trade. It is not a question of our ability to pay, or of an impossible strain upon our economic resources, but of willingness on the part of America to receive. It has been suggested that Mr. Hoover has in mind a bargain whereby, in return for a reduction of the war debt obligation, we shall consent to receive a larger volume of American exports. The suggestion would be completely incredible were it not in keeping with that extreme perversion of thought which seems to characterise the policy of statesmen in all countries. Everywhere it seems to be thought possible to protect home producers by checking imports, while at the same time striving by all sorts of artificial means to encourage exports. If America persists in this idea she will force the cancellation of all debts owed to her by other countries, war debts and others as well. And what is true of America is true also of ourselves since we are still the greatest creditor nation in the world.

It will be seen that the question of war debt payment is intimately connected with that of new foreign capital lending. Considerable irritation is felt in many quarters with the continued embargo imposed by the Treasury upon this form of lending. Yet the embargo is likely to remain for some time at least. The primary object with which it is maintained is that of supporting the pound. Foreign loans lead, in the first instance, to a demand for foreign currencies and tend to reduce the value of sterling. This fall is, of course, the link in the chain which should induce the foreign debtor to buy our goods with the proceeds of his loan.

### Other Considerations

It is the natural and proper consequence of the transaction and there is no sense in resisting it merely from a desire to maintain sterling at some fixed point. Under existing conditions, however, other considerations enter. The debtor might use the loan merely for the purpose of meeting the service of previous loans and so avoid the necessity for making the adjustments required to put his economic affairs in order. Again, although there is an abundance of bank deposits from which subscriptions to foreign loans could be made, it is far from probable that the volume of net capital saving is being increased by any large amount.

There is, in many quarters, a deep-seated belief that we must conserve our capital for the purpose of internal development and that large foreign lending would soon bring about a dissipation of capital available for the purpose. This belief reaches down to the fundamentals of economic policy. There is yet another consideration. The MacMillan Committee insisted on the need for a great advance in the methods of controlling foreign lending in order to ensure the right use of capital funds. This view is generally accepted and it may be presumed that the Treasury, without any clear idea of the methods of control which may be practicable and effective, is regarding the embargo as a preliminary step towards the creation of some regulative machinery.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### "Memories of a Misspent Youth"

SIR,—I have to thank you for a kindly review of my "Memories of a Misspent Youth," but may I be allowed, in justice to my parents and to the friends of my extreme youth, to correct misapprehensions that my unskilful pen has evidently created in "E.S.P.H.'s" mind? My home was neither bleak nor Puritan. Good heavens, no! Generations of undergraduates would be able to testify to that. And even though my father was, as I believe, either an Atheist or an Agnostic, I had plenty of opportunities of acquiring a belief in God. Nor was my childhood without "an atmosphere of romance in the shape of fairy stories or of cheerful and beautiful surroundings." Oxford in the eighties, with the Martyrs' Memorial fifty yards away, and with long days spent in the gardens of St. John's, of Wadham and of Worcester—few young children could have had better opportunities. Nor was I starved either mentally or physically. Most books in the world were at my disposal if I had chosen to demand them. The truth is I had great fun in those early years, read a lot, ate a lot, was allowed continuously to pursue my own interests and to make the best of such qualities as I possessed. And, much as I owe to Grant Allen for his encouragement and his generosity, it is an exaggeration to say that he "practically adopted" me as his son. I had the normal number of parents.

GRANT RICHARDS.

P.S.—I cannot claim any descent, "ominous" or otherwise from Benjamin Franklin.

### Cannibalism in Russia

SIR,—Mr. Lawton's letter in a recent issue does not convince me that I did him any injustice in suggesting that he exaggerated in his book the amount of cannibalism in the Russian famine of 1921. He now produces, as his authority, a Russian doctor's statement which, while admitting that cases of cannibalism "did not have a mass character as rumour alleged," claims that "none the less they were numerous" and "were spread throughout all the famine provinces." Now, even if this statement is accepted without question—and Mr. Lawton has frankly admitted in his book that trustworthy evidence was rarely obtainable—I still find no justification for his filling a third of his chapter on the famine with such blood-curdling passages as this: "Parents and children, sisters and brothers killed each other. Prowlers of the night spread terror. Boys and girls were snatched from the streets. With a promise of food, youths lured children into huts and slaughtered them with axes. The air was filled with rancour and rumour. Neighbour suspected neighbour; each thought of the other as a possible assassin. . . . Physical exhaustion led to moral atrophy. Temptation came suddenly to many; a few strove feebly to resist it; but the passion for self-preservation proved uncontrollable." And so on.

I remember, about this time, translating a reference to a suspected case of cannibalism from a

Moscow newspaper to the correspondent of a New York daily newspaper. Chuckling gratefully, he sat down and sent his editor a cable rather in the style of the passage I have just quoted from Mr. Lawton's book. Mr. Lawton, of course, does not belong to that category of writers, but, all the same, I think he has grossly overstressed the extent and the importance of these isolated incidents.

C. E. BECHHOFER ROBERTS.

### A Jutland Argument

SIR,—I thank you for your appreciative review of my book, "From Jungle to Jutland," and I should be grateful if you would allow me to reply briefly to your reviewer's thoughtful observation on my account of the battle of Jutland.

The four warships I saw on our starboard bow were undoubtedly the Battle Cruisers, and the leading warship was heavily hit by enemy gunfire at about 6 p.m.

I have not been able to find in any authoritative account of the engagement any report of any warship in Admiral Evan Thomas's Squadron being hit by the enemy's guns at that time.

Therefore the warship I saw shelled, and subsequently turn 16 points to starboard, apparently to get out of the way, could not have been the "Warspite."

CLAUDE WALLACE.

Bath Club,  
34, Dover Street, W.1.

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